









# THE IDLER

IN

## ITALY.

BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

---

*NEW SERIES.*

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*May 8th, 1828, half-past eleven at night.*—The only melancholy hours that I ever passed at the beautiful Villa Palatina, were those which I spent there last evening. Our kind and amiable friend its owner, Mr. Mills, insisted that our last dinner at Rome should be partaken of beneath his roof, and collected some of the persons we most value to meet us. Will the same party ever again meet together? The thought occurred to me more than once during the evening, and added to my *tristesse*. Alas! who can hope, much less count, on what a short time may bring forth. Death is ever hovering within reach of his prey, and if the grim tyrant spares some, during a few brief years, he may snatch away those whose loss destroys all the happiness of the survivors.

Never did guests do so little honour to the *recherché* dinner given to them, as did those of Mr. Mills, yesterday. Schemes of future meeting, too faintly spoken to cheat into hope of their speedy fulfilment, furnished the general topic; and some were there, already stricken with maladies, the harbingers of death—and they, too, spoke of again meeting! Yet who can say whether the young and the healthy may not be summoned from life before those whose infirmities alarm us for their long continuance in it?

As my eyes glanced over the extensive view beheld from the windows of the Villa Palatina, embracing some of the finest ruins of Rome, I was so forcibly reminded of the instability of all earthly things, that I became almost ashamed of indulging in selfish melancholy for my own private regrets, in face of the desolation of the once proud scene before me. And there were with me two persons to whom every ruin, and every spot in view, were “familiar as household words;” men who had

explored them all, with the feelings of the historian, the research of the antiquarian, and the reflections of the philosopher—Sir William Gell and Mr. Dodwell; both advanced towards the downward path of life, every step of which rapidly abridges the journey, and consequently reminds parting friends of the probability that each farewell may be the last. There was our host, seated in a paradise of his own creation, based on the ruins of the palace of the Cæsars, yet, forgetful for the moment of the mutability of fortune of which such striking memorials were before his eyes, thinking only that we were on the eve of parting. Mrs. Dodwell was there, her lustrous eyes often dimmed by a tear of regret at our separation, but her rare beauty in no way diminished by the sadness that clouded a face always lovely.

Baron Mortier, besides the persons already named, and our own large family, formed the party at the Villa Palatina. Baron Mortier is a very superior man; well educated, highly informed, frank and manly; he has the bearing of a *preux* chevalier, with the urbanity of a finished gentleman. Here were the natives of so many different countries—English, Irish, French, and Italian,\* united by the bonds of friendship, and animated by one sentiment—regret at separation.

Some one remarked on the pain of parting being always enhanced by the dread of never again meeting, when Mr. Dodwell, willing to give a more lively turn to the conversation, observed that the meeting of friends long separated, was, perhaps, as much to be feared.

“They will be all so changed in looks,” said he, “as to render a recognition painful, if not difficult. The old will have fallen into dotage, the mature into senility, and the young will have lost the charms of youth, their dimples having undergone the fearful metamorphosis of being converted into wrinkles. But grant that the meeting should occur before the persons of the parties should have undergone any injurious alteration, who can answer for the changes that may take place in their minds?” continued he. “Different scenes, pursuits, and trains of thought, new associations supplying the place of old attachments, the impossibility of recalling the feelings to the precise state in which they were, when daily habits of intimacy

\* Mrs. Dodwell is an Italian, and universally considered to be one of the most beautiful women of our time.

rendered the persons not only so agreeable, but almost necessary to each other. Ah! here's the rub; and this certainty of change produced by time, occasions a meeting after long absence to be rather more painful than pleasant. You ladies would exclaim—'Poor dear Lady So-and-so, or Mrs. Such-a-one, how dreadfully changed she is!'—the lady making the remark being quite unconscious that *she* is as much changed as the friend on whose altered looks she comments. We men, too, would say—'I used to think B. C. or D. a good-looking fellow, and very agreeable; but he is grown stout, and rather red-faced, and bores one to death about his health, and his schemes for amending it. Hang the fellow! he treats every man he ever chanced to know before, as if they were contemporaries.'"

We all laughed at Mr. Dedwell's picture of the pains of meeting, but it did not diminish those of parting.

TERNI, *May 9th.*—A melancholy presentiment that I shall see no more some of the dear friends left at Rome yesterday, haunted me as I drove from the Eternal City. That I shall see Rome itself no more, I cannot allow myself to think, and yet, with the uncertainty of life, who can count on any remote event? How prone are we to fear for the stability of the existence of those, either older, or more infirm in health than ourselves, notwithstanding that we every day see the young and healthy snatched away from life, and the aged and delicate spared! We fear more for others than for self; as if *we* were more exempt from danger and death than they. Strange delusion! that while we tremble for those dear to us, the conviction of the irrevocable certainty of our own dissolution is less vividly felt! we picture our own death as remote, and consequently less to be dreaded; and even when most impressed with the awful conviction that we, like all other mortals, must pass away, though our reason acknowledges the truth, our hearts refuse to believe that the event may be near.

I visited the grave of Sir W. Drummond very early yesterday morning. A blue and cloudless sky canopied the spot, and the air was as fresh and balmy, and the scene as bright, as if no graves were there to remind one of the brief space allotted to us on earth. There stood the pyramid of Caius Sextus, the sunbeams gleaming on its massive walls, whose funeral character seems to consecrate this place of graves, where so many

of our countrymen have found a last resting place. There, too, I cast my eyes on the narrow homes of Shelley and Keats; Drummond, himself a poet, would not have disliked the neighbourhood, for he loved and revered genius, whether crowned by praise, or persecuted by intolerance.

I wish the mortal remains of my poor departed friend Drummond might be left to repose here; but they are to be removed to Scotland in the course of a few months. I should like to remember his grave as it now is, with a blue sky above, and gentle breezes fanning it; and not as it will be, overhung by murky clouds, and swept by the hoarse and rude winds of bleak Scotia. I thought of the happy hours passed in his society, as I stood beside his grave—the brilliant conversation, the deep reflections, I have heard from those lips, now silent for ever—I remembered how often the hands, now mouldering in the dust, had been held out in amity to meet mine, and I dropped a tear on the stone inscribed with his name.

The monument erected to the memory of the fair and youthful Miss Bathurst, whose melancholy death excited so much interest at Rome, was glittering in the sun when I passed before it. The poetical and graceful conception, the snowy whiteness of the marble, the excellence of the execution, and the bright verdure that surrounds it, render it a peculiar ornament to the burial-ground; while the contrast between it and the massive pyramid in its vicinity, reminds one of a delicate snowdrop, germinating beneath a colossal oak. This monument, so applicable to the youth and beauty of her whose fate it commemorates, is the work of Mr. Richard Westmacott, to whose taste and skill it is highly creditable.

Sir William Gell and Count Paul Esterhazy came to see us depart; and never did the Palazza Negrone present such sad faces, as those assembled there when the heavily laden carriages drove round to the door. Poor Gell! I still seem to feel the pressure of his hand, and the tears that bedewed mine as he pressed it to his lips, and murmured his fears that we should meet no more.

"You have been visiting our friend Drummond's grave to-day," said he, "and if you ever come to Italy again, you will find me in mine."

I was tempted to be angry with our courier when I saw his smiling face, and heard the gay cracking of his whip, as we drove away. He, in the excitement of resuming his wonted

occupation, after a winter's repose, had little sympathy with our regrets, and probably anticipated with pleasurable emotions the *buona mano* he may count on receiving at every inn where we stop, for many days to come.

We noticed the whiteness of the cows feeding along the banks of the ancient Clitumnus, a peculiarity ascribed to the effect of its waters. The animals looked very picturesque, and reminded one of those offered for sacrifice in days of yore.

Saw the celebrated waterfall to-day. I have heard the majority of those who have spoken of it, declare that it disappointed them; but it has not had this effect on me, perhaps because I expected less. One of the advantages of time and travel, is to lower expectations within bounds more likely to be satisfied in reality. I thought of Byron as I gazed on this fine cataract, for he has painted it in never fading colours.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height  
 Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;  
 The fall of waters! rapid as the light  
 The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;  
 The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,  
 And boil in endless torture; while the sweat  
 Of their great agony, wrung out from this  
 Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet  
 That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again  
 Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,  
 With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,  
 Is an eternal April to the ground,  
 Making it all one emerald:—how profound  
 The gulf! and how the giant element  
 From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
 Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent  
 With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows  
 More like the fountain of an infant sea  
 Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes  
 Of a new world, than only thus to be  
 Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,  
 With many windings, through the vale:—look back!  
 Lo! where it comes, like an eternity,  
 As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
 Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

Horribly beautiful ! but on the verge,  
 From side to side, beneath the glittering mora,  
 An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,  
 Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn  
 Its steady dyes, while all around is torn  
 By the distracted waters, bears serene  
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn :  
 Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,  
 Love watching Madness with unaltered mien.

The verdure occasioned by the eternal showers of spray, which fall to a considerable distance around, I have nowhere seen equalled, except in Ireland. I noticed this aloud, and an Irish servant in our suite remarked, *sotto voce*, to one of his companions,—“Yes, our poor Ireland is as green as the wounds inflicted on it, and to which no healing balsam has yet been applied.”

The vivid hue of the verdure greatly adds to the beauty of the cataract, to the snowy foam of which it forms so fine a contrast. The naïve remark of the painter, on beholding this magnificent work of nature—“Well done water, by ——!” rude and simple as the phrase is, struck me as being much more poetical than the tame observation of Addison, who wrote —“I think there is something more astonishing in this cascade, than in all the water-works of Versailles.” And well might he think so! but who, except Addison, with one spark of poetry in his heart, could have made such a reflection? He is less anti-poetical when he asserts his belief that this is the gulf through which Virgil’s Alecto plunged herself into the infernal regions. An hypothesis in which Addison is neither supported by similarity of names, nor the opinions of the learned.

There are some sights in nature, and this is one of them, well calculated to exclude, while beholding them, the self-occupation to which mortals are so prone. Who can remember one’s own puny cares and puerile gratifications, when gazing on this marvel, the eye dazzled by its grandeur, and the ear filled with its mighty roar? Imagination soars from its mansion of clay, to make acquaintance with objects so new, so glorious, and when exhausted by its exertions, returns to its abode, drooping and dejected at the consciousness of how far it falls short of the power to conceive or paint what has awak-

ened it to rapture. These mighty waters, instinct with life, and fraught with super-human vigour, seem animated by a spirit of madness, into the terrible velocity with which they dash from rock to rock.

The dryness of the atmosphere, the heat of the climate, and the volcanic soil, which, even in the most fertile parts of Italy, betrays its nature, render water more beautiful as an object, and more agreeable as a refrigeration, than in our colder clime, where, even in the midst of summer, a certain dampness is felt. The prismatic colours with which the showers of the cascade are invested by the sun have a most dazzling effect, varying from the golden-tinted topaz to the fiery-streaked opal.

The valley of Terni is watered by the Nera, and is fertile and well cultivated. We paused not to examine the ruins or objects of antiquity collected at Terni, though much pressed to do so by our cicerone, who looked on us with an expression approaching to contempt in his countenance, when we declined his offer of conducting us to them. After a six years' residence in Italy, and many pilgrimages made to view its most celebrated ruins and antiquities, we were not disposed to give up the time required for inspecting those of Terni; and hence increased the displeasure of our guide, whose *amour propre* seemed wounded by our not showing more respect to his birth-place. We, however, somewhat consoled him by remembering it was also that of Tacitus the historian, and of two of the Roman emperors.\*

It is amusing to detect the various resources vanity finds for its indulgence when excluded from personal gratifications. He who cannot be vain of himself, becomes so of his country; and if its present abasement checks this feeling, glories in its former greatness. In reply to our excuse for not examining the antiquities of Terni, namely, that we had inspected nearly all those of the south of Italy, our guide said that, "nevertheless, objects might be seen there that could be nowhere else found;" nor did our liberal *douceur*, bestowed at parting, quite mollify his feelings for the slight he imagined we had offered to the place of his birth.

The foam of the cascade, thrown up to an amazing height, is seen at a considerable distance, and has a fine effect, contrasted with the vivid green of the verdure of the surrounding woods.

\* Tacitus and Florianus.

The Velino, after its stupendous fall, rushes into the Nera, where its rapid course may be traced by the froth and globules it throws up, even as the course of a conqueror may be discovered by the marks of his impetuosity.

**SPOLETTO.**—The country about Spoleto is picturesque, and the town, like most of those in Italy, boasts its share of antiquities. The principal inn, though large, has made little progress in the modern art of comfort, for the dinner was more copious than palatable, and the apartments are more roomy than clean, or furnished. Our cicerone, for even Spoleto has its guide, rehearsed, in a monotonous tone, the claims of his native place on our attention. He told us, with a proud air, that this had been the capital of Umbria, and, of what our eyes could not fail to inform us, that it was built on the crater of an extinct volcano.

Some fine columns, and an edifice dignified by the sonorous title of the Temple of Concord, afforded him subjects for a harangue, in which all his erudition was called into play; and on some fragments, said to have formed part of a temple of Jupiter, he was eloquent.

The aqueduct, which he insisted was a Roman work, bears evident proof of belonging to a much later date; and the pointed arches seem to establish its origin as being due to the Goths. No structure forms a more picturesque object in a landscape than does an aqueduct; and seen spanning a rich country, always reminds me of one of those fine pictures of Claude Lorraine or the Poussins, who delighted to represent them.

We saw the church of St. Filippo Neri and the cathedral, which contains some pictures considered by our cicerone to be *chefs-d'œuvre* of art, but which are not remarkable.

The ruins of a castle, said to have been built by Theodoric, drew forth a philippic from our cicerone, on the inferiority of the buildings erected by the Goths to those of the Romans. He boasted that he, unlike many pretenders to antiquarian lore, could at a glance discern the one from the other, and added, with no little self-complacency, that if there was any thing of which he felt vain, it was his skill on this point.

I was glad that I had not even hinted a doubt about the aqueduct and its pointed arches, for I should have been sorry to wound the vanity of the poor cicerone on a point in which it was so vulnerable.



There are some good houses at Spoleto, and all these are styled palaces. Their inhabitants must lead dull lives unless they are fond of study, as I have seen no town in Italy so monotonous as this, or where the stream of life seems to stagnate so much. A Neapolitan, accustomed to the animation and gaiety of his native city, would die of *ennui* at Spoleto.

LORETTO.—Returned from the viewing the Santa Casa, and its treasures. In no place are greater demands made on the credulity of beholders than here, where a miracle is attested to have occurred for which no motive can be assigned, or no object be effected, except it be the enrichment of Loretto; and the employment of an innumerable quantity of jewels for the decoration of Notre Dame, which decoration increases the number of those who flock to her shrine. A considerable portion of the jewels, however, are said to have disappeared during the time that Loretto was in the possession of the French. Whether taken from religious feeling, as relics, or from motives of cupidity, is a question not quite easy to be satisfactorily answered; the goodnatured part of the community being disposed to believe the first, and the ill-natured the second motive.

“Robbing the Virgin would be too heinous a crime to suspect catholics to perpetrate,” said the cicerone who conducted us to the Santa Casa; “nevertheless, that so much and such valuable property should have disappeared, *does* look suspicious;” and he shook his head gravely.

The church which enshrines the Santa Casa is a large, if not a fine building, and owes its decorations to Giacomo della Porta, and Bramente. One side has arcades, and over the entrance is a statue of the Virgin, from the chisel of Lombardi. The bronze gates are fine, and ornamented by *bassi rilievi*, the lower range of which have been nearly effaced by the religious pressure of the lips of the pious frequenters.

The church contains not less than twenty chapels, exclusive of that which has acquired it such celebrity, and which stands in its centre. The Santa Casa is of an oblong shape, about thirty-one or thirty-two feet long, and something less than half that number of feet in breadth. Its height is eighteen or nineteen feet. It is incrustated with marble, richly decorated with sculpture, illustrating the history of the Virgin, executed by Sansovino, San Gallo, and Bandinelli.

The interior of the walls are left in their primitive state, and are of brick, mixed with fragments of stone, offering a striking contrast to the costly decoration of the exterior. A silver screen of trellice-work separates the portion called the sanctuary from the rest of the room; and here stands the image worshipped by so many adorers, and said to be the work of St. Luke. This image is decked in glittering robes, wears a triple crown, and her neck and robe were plentifully ornamented with precious stones. She holds an image of the infant Jesus, and a globe. The face is of an Ethiopian hue, and looks like that of some Eastern idol adorned with barbaric pomp, rather than that of the meek and lowly mother of Christ.

The end opposite to the sanctuary contains an altar under a window, through which it is averred the angel entered to announce the blessed tidings of the glorious destiny that awaited the Virgin.

Though the immense wealth that once belonged to the Santa Casa has disappeared, our Lady of Loretto has not been neglected by the catholic crowned heads of modern times; for a goodly array of embroidered robes, jewelled ornaments, pearl necklaces, and gemmed crowns, have been provided for her. Nor have her less elevated devotees been sparing of presents, for many were the costly gifts shown to us, offered up at this shrine within the last few years.

The list of the treasures once belonging to Loretto, was exhibited to us; and the priest who keeps it, looked sorrowfully as he remarked that war was indeed a fearful thing, when it caused even the property of the Mother of the King of Heaven to be as little respected as that of the sovereigns of the earth.

"Time was," said the priest, "when our Lady of Loretto possessed treasures greater than all the kings and princes of Europe. Read the list, and see the countless jewels of inestimable price, the golden and silver ornaments that were hers. She might have each day clothed herself three times in fresh robes, and precious stones of the most rare and costly kind, without ever twice putting on the same; while now, such is the mutability of fortune, she has not more than would suffice for a daily change of raiment."

Her rent was not less than 30,000 crowns yearly,—no illiberal provision for sustaining her dignity; and her cellars were kept amply stocked with wines of the most superior quality. Indeed, so large was the supply, that it might have led people

to imagine that abstinence was not among the virtues of Nostra Dama di Loreto.

One of our party ventured to remark that St. Luke excelled not in sculpture, for that the Madonna was not the most symmetrical of female forms. "The saint might have made her beautiful had he so thought fit," said the guide, "but he wished to show of how little value beauty is, and that personal comeliness is of no avail in the sight of God, who selected the meek Mary in preference to all women. The French took this precious image away, but restored it, fearful, if they retained it, that some heavy calamity would befall them as a chastisement for the sacrilege."

The gravity with which this information was delivered, proved that the speaker was duly impressed with the importance of the subject.

A list of the present possessions of our Lady of Loreto was exhibited to us, with the names of the donors attached to the description of each costly gift, which no doubt serves as an incitement to the generosity of all rich visitors. Some of the ornaments were of great value, and our admiration of them seemed to give peculiar satisfaction to those who showed them. The recent date of the presents prove that the pious votaries of superstition are not now less munificent towards this favourite idol than were those of more remote times.

On looking at the treasures of Loreto, one might fancy oneself in the fifteenth, rather than in the nineteenth, century: and I confess, however impious the avowal may be considered by good catholics, that I thought, while gazing on them, that the sum their sale would produce, would be much better employed in promoting education and religion, than in thus permitting what would produce such inestimable benefits to lie idle to decorate an idol. Innumerable were the jewels, and objects in gold, silver, and other precious materials, that hung round the walls of the sanctuary; giving it more the appearance of a glittering toy-shop, than of a place meant for religious worship.

The Bambino, too, is decorated by many a gem of great value. This image is less dingy than that of the Madonna, yet reflects no credit on the skill of the saintly sculptor to whom it is attributed.

The history of the Santa Casa is inscribed on the walls of the church which enshrines it, in many languages, and copies

of it may be purchased for a trifle. It states that this was the identical house in which the blessed Virgin was born; that it stood in a lane in Nazareth, and after a long lapse of time was, in 1291, conveyed by angels from Galilee to Tersato; and thence, in a few years after, to Recanati, the trees and shrubs of which place are said to have bowed their heads lowly on the approach of the sacred edifice.

The dangers to which the pilgrims who resorted to offer their homage at this shrine, were exposed to from the brigands in the neighbourhood, rendered the spot unworthy of any longer possessing such a treasure; and the angels again removed it. The new site chosen for it was not found more fitting than the two former, for the avarice of the owners, two brothers, led to a quarrel about the division of the profits to be derived from the pious votaries of the Santa Casa, which terminated in a duel, the result of which was as fatal as the mortal fray between the Kilkenny cats, both combatants having been killed.

To permit the house to remain any longer on a spot stained by such a sinful proceeding, a proceeding, too, instigated by its possession, was deemed impossible; hence it was transported through the air to its present situation, to be, as the *relazione istorica* of Loretto declares, "*Il piu bel vanto della nostra Italia.*"

The heterogeneous mixture of saints and sibyls introduced in the decoration of the Casa Santa, has a very extraordinary effect, and greatly deteriorates from the air of sanctity that one expects to find in the place. The introduction of the sibyls reminds one more of pagan rites and superstitions than of Christian worship; but he who would hint this truth to those who show the Santissima Casa, must possess more desire for argument, and a greater volubility to sustain it, than falls to the lot of most travellers; so susceptible are the guardians of the shrine relative to its sanctity being questioned.

Addison imagines that the veneration paid by the ancient Romans to the humble abode of Romulus, on the Mount Capitol, led to the history of the Santa Casa, and the adoration which it receives. One advantage, however, has been derived from the credence accorded to this pretended miracle, namely, the vast sum it has drawn to Loretto; but whether this advantage can compensate for the encouragement given to superstition by the adoption of the fiction, is a question for casuists to resolve; and this glittering shrine, with its costly

toys, promises long to offer an example of the cupidity that led to the invention of the fable, and the credulity that has caused so implicit a belief in it during so long a period.

The spicery is not the least interesting portion of this building. It is arranged somewhat like a library, the shelves, instead of books, bearing some hundred gallipots, on which are painted scriptural subjects, from designs by Raffaele and Giulio Romano. Some of them are very fine, but the form of the vases deteriorates from the beauty, by the disagreeable associations they recall; and one regrets that such spirited drawings should not have been perpetuated on more pleasingly-shaped utensils.

The Lady of Loretto, like most other fine ladies, has had a vast expenditure assigned for her servitors, though she herself partakes of none of the good things provided. Her treasury, her cellar, and her spicery, like theirs, would indicate the physical wants of a mundane personage; and the ample provision of these luxuries proves that she, no more than earthly women, is thought to be exempt from a partiality to them. What a coarse and vulgar notion to entertain of the pure and holy Madonna, that fair ideal of all that is most exquisite, is it, to believe her propitiated by jewels, fine clothes, gold lamps, spices, and rare wines?

Various were the pretty toys in silver filigree, ivory, and gold, offered to us for sale by the proprietor of the inn where we stopped, each and all bearing some symbol of the Madonna, or of her dwelling when on earth. Chaplets already blessed, formed of every material, were displayed, from lapis-lazuli set in gold, down to ebony and more simple box-wood, with medallions on which were engraved images of the Madonna and Infant Jesus. Divers articles for the toilette, made of silver filigree, such as boxes, pincushions, and tablet cases, were displayed, each bearing some holy symbol; the Virgin, or her blessed Son, being placed as presiding emblems over patch-boxes, or rows of pins, as figures of Venuses and Cupids are sometimes used to ornament the toilette utensils of modern belles.

ANCONA.—This town offers a striking contrast to Loretto. Here all is activity and bustle; the stream of life flows rapidly along, and all seem occupied by the actual present, forwarding the business of existence; instead of, as at Loretto, vegetating on the wages of imposture, and endeavouring to keep alive a

belief in a fable, finding every year fewer believers, as education extends its influence.

The position of this town is admirable. Built on the side of a hill, it descends to the edge of the water, and boasts a magnificent mole, crowded by persons in the picturesque dresses of Eastern climes, as well as many in those of our more civilized ones. This *mélange* of costumes and countenances, seen continually passing and repassing on the mole, gives it a very lively aspect; and the triumphal arch erected in honour of Trajan, who beautified the town with quays of marble, still in fine preservation, completes a picture worthy the pencil of a Canaletti.

The mole has likewise another arch, erected in honour of the Pope Benedict XIV. This is the work of Vanvitelli, to whom also was entrusted the building of the mole, and the completion of the lazaretto, which do credit to his architectural skill.

Ancona, seen from a distance, has a very good effect, but when entered, disappoints the visitor; the majority of the streets being narrow and ill planned; and houses of the meanest description mingling with the large and well finished dwellings of the aristocratic portion of the inhabitants of the town.

Ancona has been attacked and conquered in turn by the Romans, Goths, Lombards, and Saracens. In 1532 it became incorporated with the papal state, and in 1799 was seized by the united forces of the Russians, Austrians, and the Turks, notwithstanding the vigorous defence made by General Meunier. The taking of Ancona is said to have led to a serious misunderstanding between the Austrians and the Emperor Paul; for the Russian flag having been hoisted from the ramparts, was torn down by the Austrians.

Ancona furnished brilliant examples of patriotism and heroic self-devotion during the memorable siege, when the unnatural coalition between Christian, Archbishop of Mayence, and Arch-chancellor of the empire (whom Frederick Barbarossa deputed to represent him in Italy), and the Venetians, brought the forces of the first by land, and those of the second by sea, to attack Ancona.

The Venetians among their ships had one of so vast a size, that they named it *Il Mondo*. Wooden towers of great height and magnitude had been erected on the deck of this colossal ship, which was considered as the very centre of the power of

the fleet. Great was the mischief and havoc occasioned by this stupendous vessel, until a priest of Ancona, observing its effects, resolved to attempt its destruction. He swam boldly to the prow of *Il Mondo*, bearing an axe between his teeth, and before he was observed, accomplished his design of cutting through the cables which moored the ship. Then occasionally diving under water, he returned to the shore uninjured, though assailed by the Venetians who pursued him. The vast ship drifted among the other vessels, its great size producing all the mischief to its own party that it was meant to effect on its foes.

Another example of patriotic courage was given during the siege, and by one of the gentler sex too, which it gladdens my woman's heart to record. This heroine rushed with a lighted torch, and set fire to a wooden tower, at whose base she stood, fearless of the missiles aimed at her, until the flames had spread a general conflagration around, which consumed the batteries of the enemy to ashes. But this was not the only instance of heroic courage displayed by a woman during the memorable siege of Ancona.

Another, and perhaps a still more remarkable one, is given; more remarkable, inasmuch as that fortitude during protracted trials must be esteemed as offering even a more elevated proof of grandeur of mind, than the enthusiasm that suddenly leads to a temporary risk of personal destruction. A young and handsome woman of high birth, holding her infant to her breast, found a sentinel who had sunk exhausted at his post. She reproached him for this violation of duty, and he endeavoured to excuse it, by stating that he was overpowered by the effects of famine.

"Art thou a man, and thus speak?" said the noble woman; "for fifteen days my life has only been sustained by the most disgusting food, too scantily found to enable me to administer sufficient sustenance to the fevered lips of my child; yet that sustenance would I yield to thee, rather than thou shouldst perish, and our hapless country be thus deprived of one of its defenders."

The soldier, animated by the words of this noble woman, and abashed at being excelled in fortitude by her, arose from the ground, and seizing his arms, gallantly discharged his duty, and vanquished no less than four of the enemy by his own hand.

I cannot refrain from citing another example of the fortitude of my sex, furnished also during the siege of Ancona : when a woman, beholding her sons perishing for want of sustenance, and unable to procure any for them, opened a vein in her left arm, and having disguised the sanguine stream by culinary preparation, prolonged their lives at the risk of her own.

Well might our great and good Scott say of women—

O woman ! in our hours of ease,  
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,  
And variable as the shade  
By the light quivering aspen made ;  
When pain and anguish wring the brow,  
A ministering angel thou !

From being less frequented by travellers than most other places in Italy, Ancona possesses no good inn. The furniture of the apartments assigned to us, and the dinner served, were of the most primitive kind ; but as both were clean, and not deficient in quantity, though inferior in quality, we were not discontented. A copious jug of smoking hot brandy punch, brought up by the landlord when we had about half dined, more surprised than pleased us. He smiled self-complacently as he laid it on the table, and assured us, that knowing from hearsay the partiality of English milords for that beverage, he had acquired the art of making it from a captain of a ship, and hoped we should find it excellent.

Our courier was more than half disposed to resent as an insult this well-meant attention of our host. He declared, with no little gesticulation, that “*he*, who well knew the habits of English lords and ladies, had never seen any one of them drink hot punch at or after dinner ; iced *ponche-à-la-Romaine*, it was true, he had known them to partake of sometimes, but never of the abomination now presented.”

The host shrugged his shoulders, looked the displeasure to which he did not give utterance, and walked away, taking with him the steaming punch, the fumes of which had not improved the odour of the *salle-à-manger*. Nevertheless, I dare be sworn, the said courier and the other domestics failed not to do ample justice to the preparation.

During our walk on the mole we encountered several pretty women, and were struck with a peculiarity generally observable in Italians, namely, the total absence of that coquetry, so visible in women with pretensions to beauty in France, and



even in England. Italian women look as if deep passions would find them ready to obey their dictates, but that to the minor ones, such as vanity and coquetry, they were not disposed to yield.

This peculiarity equally pervades women of all classes in Italy; for I have observed it in those of the highest rank, as well as in the lowest. It is this concentration of passion which in the middle ages led the softer sex into the commission of crimes from which the heart of woman naturally recoils, originating incidents that fill the old chronicles with tales of horror. In our more civilized days, a similar disposition exhibits itself in attachments which, if not always blameless, are generally of long duration, and exclude the flirtations commenced through vanity, and continued through folly, so frequently witnessed in other countries. I have seen Italian women known to have attachments, the publicity of which in France or England would have called forth the severest censure, if not exclusion from society, absolutely shocked at beholding the flirtations of ladies of both these nations, though free from actual guilt, or even the thought of it. When the innocence of such flirtations has been explained to the Italians, they were not less shocked, and they have said—"What, then, can be the motive that induces these ladies to permit such marked attentions in public, and to receive them with such complacency, if no real attachment exists?" The motive assigned, namely, vanity, prompting the desire of exciting admiration, and the wish for its continuance leading to an apparent preference for the adulator, they could not understand, because vanity has so little influence over them.

RAVENNA.—The fertility of the country around Ravenna forcibly reminded me of Tuscany, and the flourishing aspect of the farms denotes not only the richness of the soil, but the wealth and industry of the proprietors. What a melancholy contrast is afforded by the town itself, in which all looks as if falling to decay. Large palaces untouched by paint, for centuries; shops so ill supplied and untempting, as to denote the stagnation of commerce; and streets, through many parts of which the rank grass obtrudes.

On reaching the inn, for there is only one in the town, and that is of a most primitive character of rusticity, we ordered our repast, and sallied forth on foot to view the lions of the

place. As we proceeded we were surprised to find the streets wholly deserted, and the houses shut up, which gave the place the air of a city ravaged by the plague, and deserted by those who could fly from it. Not a human being was to be seen; nay, the very dogs, usually encountered in towns, seemed to have followed the example of their owners, and to have fled.

Various were the conjectures we formed as to the probable cause of this desertion of the silent and solitary city through which we were pacing, and vainly did we look around in search of some one of whom to demand an explanation of it; when on turning the corner of a larger street or place than we had hitherto passed, the mystery was solved, in a manner that shocked our feelings not a little; for we suddenly came almost in personal contact with the bodies of three men hanging from bars erected for the purpose of suspending them. Never did I behold so fearful a sight! The ghastly faces were rendered still more appalling by the floating matted locks, and long beards; which, as the bodies were agitated into movement by the wind, moved backward and forward. The eyes seemed starting from their sockets, and the tongues protruded from the distended lips, as if in horrid mockery. I felt transfixed by the terrible sight, from which I could not avert my gaze; and each movement of the bodies seemed to invest them with some new features of horror. A party of soldiers of the Pope guarded the place of execution, and paced up and down with gloomy looks, in which fear was more evident than disgust. Within view of the spot stood the tomb of Dante, whose "Inferno" offers scarcely a more hideous picture than the one presented to our contemplation. The papal uniform, too, proclaiming that the deaths of these unfortunate men had been inflicted by order of him who professed to be the vicar of the Father of Mercy on earth, added to the horror of the sight.

This tragedy, whose denouement we beheld, was one of the fatal results of arbitrary power, driving into madness men who might have been restrained by salutary laws, judiciously administered. Nowhere has the power of the papal government been mercifully wielded, and least of all in Romagna; where revolt, produced by injustice, has been punished with a severity that would indicate that the tenets and example given by the Saviour were little followed by the head of the Roman Catholic Church. The arbitrary measures carried into execution in Romagna in 1819, affected every class of society there, and

furnished cause for a general discontent, which augmented daily when sentences of dismissal from offices, affording the sole means of support to large families, imprisonments, and even perpetual banishment, were passed by a provisional power, reducing hundreds to misery and despair.

This universal discontent manifested itself in various forms, and "murmurs loud and deep" were heard on every side; for the cardinal legates, disliked for their severity, and despised for their weakness, were not sufficiently feared to enable them to silence the reproaches of the injured, who, excited into madness from hopelessness of finding justice, were through a spirit of vengeance urged into crime. The streets of Ravenna, Faenza, Forli and Cesena frequently offered examples of the spirit of reprisal, which led to acts of barbarous, but not unmerited, vengeance.

Wretched is the country where the punishment of wrongs is left not to the laws, but to the people; who, infuriated by passion, are guided by revenge, instead of being actuated only by a spirit of justice. These sanguinary acts of illegal justice, far from exciting the horror that similar ones inspire in countries where the laws are respected, found more sympathy for the wrongs that urged their committal, than disgust for the crimes, even among those the least disposed to sanction them.

One of the inevitable results of tyranny is, that its victims are pardoned for the excesses to which it leads, and when punishment falls on its ministers, not only is little pity felt for their fate, but a supineness in revealing the actors in these tragedies, is evinced by those who, under a different system of government, would have been amongst the most active in denouncing them. A knowledge of this tacit acquiescence in their acts of vengeance never fails to encourage the perpetrators to fresh crimes.

Such became the case at Ravenna, until the papal government, alarmed at the increasing acts of violence daily committed, recalled the cardinals of that place and Forli, whose weakness rendered them neither respected nor feared, and substituted in their stead the Cardinal Rivarola, a Genoese of noble family. The choice could not have been more unfortunate. Of an impetuous character, and an irascible temper, the natural goodness of his heart, and intelligence of his mind lost their influence over him when exercising the difficult functions he was called to fulfil. Some instances of heat and impatience on his part

soon spread general alarm in Romagna, and too speedily did his conduct justify it. The severity of the punishments inflicted for trivial offences furnished the best excuse for the antipathy entertained against the papal government by the inhabitants of Ravenna.

If many tragedies were enacted by order of the Cardinal, broad comedies also were not wanting to vary his reign. Among these latter, it is only necessary to cite one as an example. Nocturnal meetings and disturbances having taken place, and the walls of the town being frequently found in the mornings covered with written menaces posted up during the night, against the government and the Cardinal, his Eminence found no better remedy to check this disorder than by publishing an edict, commanding that the most severe punishment should be inflicted on any of the inhabitants of Ravenna, without respect to rank, sex, or age, who should be discovered to pass through the streets from the setting of the sun, however early the hour, until the rising, without bearing a lantern. Nor was this command dispensed with even when the moon, which in Italy sheds a light that in less favoured countries might well be mistaken for that of the luminary whence it borrows its splendour, was brilliantly illuminating the town; and most ludicrous was the scene represented to be, of a number of persons passing and repassing, holding lanterns in their hands, when the silvery rays of the moon rendered the place as light as day.

The population of Ravenna consists of twenty thousand people, and, owing to the want of commerce, scarcely twenty lanterns could be purchased to enable the inhabitants to comply with the Cardinal's edict. But as the order was inflexible, and the irascible temper of him who issued it was well known, it became necessary to exercise every possible contrivance to make, of every sort of material suitable to such an object, the lanterns which the shops could not supply. The ingenuity of the Ravennese soon effected that which would have puzzled a less imaginative people. They laughed at each other as, like the inhabitants of China, they hurried along with painted paper, oiled silk, and chintz lanterns in their hands.

But there were tears and bitterness beneath this momentary mirth, for, while this buffoonery was enacting, sentences of dismissal from employments, of dishonour, and of perpetual banishment, inflicted without actual proof of guilt, were daily

occurring; the Cardinal yielding to the wishes and suggestions of the bigots who professed a boundless devotion to the papal government, evinced only by the relentless persecution of those of their townsmen who differed from them in politics, or against whom they had any personal pique, which instigated them to vengeance. The insulting terms, too, in which the sentences were worded, added poignancy to their severity, and revolted the feelings of all who perused them. The sentenced were called by some ridiculous and offensive *soubriquet* of which they had probably never previously heard. A young man of noble birth, large fortune, and universally esteemed, was slightly deformed in his person, and this infirmity, when an unjust sentence was pronounced, was noticed by the insertion of the words, "The Count——, known by the name of the hunchback, is condemned."

Among other predilections of the Cardinal Rivarola, was a decided preference for the society of handsome women, and, as those who professed to know him best asserted, a willingness to exhibit his well-formed legs, which had been honoured by the eulogiums of a certain celebrated and beautiful princess. Excited to vengeance by a series of outrages and injustice, one evening when it was known that he was to pass some hours at the residence of the Countess Rusponi, he was watched and waited for near the gate of the court of the Palazzo Rusponi; and when the carriage entered and was approaching the house, fire-arms were discharged at him. The Cardinal Rivarola escaped unhurt, owing to his having, by accident, not occupied his usual seat in the carriage; but the Canonico Muti of Ravenna, who filled it, received the wound, which was at first believed to be mortal, but from which he recovered. The Cardinal renounced the agreeable *soirée* he had anticipated, returned to his palace, and the would-be assassin fled, and remained undiscovered, though it was declared that two men were seen to rush from the spot when the shot was fired.

The Pope, irritated by this scandalous affair, recalled the Cardinal, and, as a punishment to Ravenna, sent a commission there, to which Monsignore Invernizzi was named president. This commission was all-powerful, holding in its hands the destinies, nay, the lives of the people.

Soon did it yield to the baneful influence of the fanatic sect opposed to the Carbonari, and thirsting for vengeance on its opponents.

The inhabitants of Ravenna shuddered with dread at the arrival of the commission; the first act of which was to command a vigorous pursuit of the actors in the last crime aimed against the person of the Cardinal. Among the individuals who were arrested and cast into prison, were Gambelli, Spadoni, and two others, all the sons of respectable artisans in easy circumstances, and who had received a good education. The public opinion, if it pronounced them not innocent, was little disposed to consider them all guilty; and the inquisitorial, mysterious, and irregular mode in which the proceedings were carried on, revolted the people. The accused were all condemned to death, with the exception of a young man named Frignani, who escaped by feigning to be insane, and who enacted the part of a lunatic so well as to impose on Monsignore Invernizzi.

The unhappy culprits received not even the honour of the sentence to the guillotine, but were condemned to the last insult, that of being hanged (a mode of death considered by the Italians to be the most ignominious of all), to serve as an example to strike terror. Ravenna received the lesson with indignation, and public opinion manifested itself as strongly against the sentence as was consistent with the want of power to resist its execution; and more perhaps than was prudent with regard to the safety of those who gave utterance to their reprobation. Powerless to save the lives of the innocent, mixed up perhaps with the guilty, the whole population, including all ranks, of both sexes, and of all ages, quitted Ravenna before the break of the day fixed for the execution. The noble and the rich retired to their country-houses, and the poor left their humble roofs and sought shelter beneath the lofty pine trees of the old forest in the neighbourhood, leaving the completion of the tragedy to be witnessed only by the vile actors in it, and the strangers who by chance arrived at the spot on so inauspicious a day.

The blue and cloudless sky, and the genial warmth of as lovely a day as Italy affords, formed a striking contrast to that horrific scene of death from which we turned shocked and disgusted, pondering on the madness that urges men to wage war against their fellow men, as if the afflictions to which flesh is heir are not sufficient, without adding to them.

In the inn where I now write, did Byron sojourn when he left Venice, to follow to her natal town the lady of his love.

He had heard she was ill, dangerously ill, and he knew that a passion deep and impetuous as those only of sunny climes experience, was struggling in her young heart against the still, small voice of conscience that opposed, but opposed it in vain. He had vanquished his own ardent desire to behold her; nay, he had determined to seek safety from temptation, by a flight from Venice to England. His preparations for the journey were made, his very gondola was at his door, and himself equipped for departure, when tidings came of her increased illness; and he forgot every thing but her danger, and the dread of adding to it by his leaving Italy. In this very room was it, that, trembling with emotion, he ventured to enquire about her health, and was told that the doctors said she could not live; when, in violent perturbation, and regardless that he spoke to strangers that which should not be said, as implicating the fame of her he loved, he vowed that if she died he wished not to live.

Poor Byron! that wildly throbbing heart is now at rest, those impetuous passions are stilled in the grave, yet I cannot gaze on the objects around me, objects which probably occupy precisely the same places, and wear the same aspect, as when you beheld them, without pitying the anxiety you here endured, and the genuine affection that led you to exclaim, "If she dies, I wish not to live." How well I remember his declaration to me of the fervour and devotion of his attachment, at that period. "I do assure you," would he say, "that I thought of nothing but her; and had she ceased to exist, I believe that I should not have survived."

We questioned our hosts about Byron, and they spoke of him with affection and veneration. "He was so charitable," they said, "and so full of pity for the unfortunate."

I went over the Palazzo Guiccioli to-day, paused in the apartments in it so long occupied by Byron, and in the one in which he wrote "*Sardanapalus*," the generous "*Defence of Pope*," the fifth canto of "*Don Juan*," which he told me he discontinued at the request of the Countess Guiccioli, and various other productions. I could not have looked at rooms once occupied by such a brilliant genius, even though I had never seen him, without emotion; but how is this feeling increased by having been well acquainted with him, and being enabled, by a perfect recollection, to bring back to the mind's

eye the exact image of the man, in the local habitation in which he spent many a day. Strange, that in that habitation I could recal his person to memory much more vividly than in places where I know he had never been ! When I wish to remember his appearance most accurately, I think of him riding at Genoa, or seated in the salons, or in the balconies of the *Albergo-de-la-Ville* ; and not only can I then recollect his person perfectly, but the tones of his voice come back to me as fresh as if heard yesterday.

There is a sort of similarity in the fate of Dante and Byron that must have more than once occurred to the latter while here. Both were unhappy in their domestic lives, however different might have been the causes, and the characters of the ladies whom they wedded. Both exiles from their countries, and writhing under a senso of the injustice with which they had been treated, both sought and found that peace at Ravenna denied them at home.

The Palazzo Guiccioli is a large one, with a fine staircase, and various suites of rooms. Those occupied by Lord Byron were apart from the rest, and one of them was a saloon of very large dimensions, the walls of which had been painted in fresco, under his directions, with copies from plates of some of Titian's pictures, and had a good effect. By how many various passions had he been influenced during his sojourn in the rooms, I loitered in to-day ! Love, that guided him to this abode, though potent in his breast, was soon mingled with that passionate devotion to liberty, and sympathy with those who were denied this good, which was so distinguishing a trait in the character of the poet. Hence he entered into the feelings, nay more, was disposed to perform an active part in the resistance to the tyrannical sway of the government, then contemplated in Romagna by the liberals there ; and, like all undertakings in which he embarked, he was as warmly anxious and interested in this scheme, as if he had been a personal sufferer from the misrule he wished to subvert.

To those who did not personally know Byron, it will appear extraordinary that he could thus mix himself up with the politics of a country where his sojourn had been but brief, and its continuance was still uncertain ; but those who were acquainted with the extraordinary mobility of his mind, can easily imagine how quickly he participated in the feelings of



those around him, and espoused their cause, though his coalition with them might be attended with no little risk to himself.

But even while thus acting Byron could laugh at, and ridicule his own quixotism with more wit and humour than could be called into play against it by others. With a temperament that peculiarly exposed him to acts of chivalric rashness, Byron possessed so quick a perception of the ridiculous, that he could not disguise from himself the indiscretion of many of his own proceedings; and while pursuing conduct that his sober judgment disapproved, he would, as if in atonement, indulge in a mockery of it, more sarcastic than that of those who wished to attack him.

The *custode* who showed us the apartments was loud in his praises of Lord Byron, and recounted various instances of his charity.

"He could not see a person in distress without succouring him," said he, "and the poor of Ravenna and its neighbourhood soon discovered this benevolent disposition, and beset him every day when he went to the *Pigneta*.\* But it was not money alone that he gave them, *signora*, kind words and a patient hearing of their misfortunes accompanied his gifts; and, paupers as they were, they valued these scarcely less. I remember well his meeting a poor woman of extreme age, and his telling her to come here; when he not only heard her tale of distress, but gave her gold, and a weekly pension beside."

I questioned the man about the habits of Byron, and he answered that they were *molto bizzario*, always reading or writing, taking little pleasure except in riding in the *Pigneta*, or playing with his favourite animals.

"Though profuse to the poor," continued the *custode*, "he indulged in no luxuries himself, *signora*; and there was not a servitor in this Palazzo, that would not have thought himself aggrieved, had his repasts been so scanty, and of so ordinary a quality as those of the Lord Byron. He was not, like the generality of the travellers we hear of (for here we see but few), pampered, and never satisfied with the fare set before them. He was greatly beloved at Ravenna, and we all grieved when he left us."

\* The name by which the Ravennese call the Forest.

On showing us the suite of apartments formerly occupied by the Contessa Guiccioli, he pointed to a very ill-executed portrait representing her playing on the pianoforte; and assured us that it by no means rendered her justice, she being fairer, he averred, than even the dames of northern lands, and with golden hair. "We were all proud and glad, *signora*, when the Count Guiccioli brought home his beautiful young bride. *Oimé!* we thought not that either would have cause to regret the nuptials. The Count belongs to one of the most ancient families in Italy, and the lady descends from a long line of illustrious ancestors. Her grandmother, a celebrated beauty in her time, was daughter to the Marquis di Bagno of Mantua; and her mother, who died in childbirth only a year or so after the young Countess's marriage, was a very handsome lady, and daughter of the Contessa Macherelli; one of whose sisters married the Count Cobentzel of Vienna, and by another sister the family became allied to the noble houses of Erdeddi, Naddati, and Esterhazy."

The old servitor seemed to have so much pleasure in recapitulating the grandeur of the family connexions of the Countess, that I listened patiently to his statement, which appeared to delight him not a little.

"She was a kind and gentle lady, with a smiling face, and an open hand," said the *custode*. "She loved this stranger lord, and, for the matter of that, so did all who approached him. Poor lady! how his death must have afflicted her!

"In this room, *signora*," said he, as we entered another chamber, "Lord Byron slept. Often has the light been seen burning in it till long after day had appeared; and we used to marvel that one who was rich, and able to command all the luxuries of life, could prefer so abstemious a mode of existence, and such incessant toil. I have seen these chambers so littered with books that there was scarcely room to move about in them."

We lingered in the apartments which had been occupied by one whose society we had so much enjoyed, and whose untimely death we had so sincerely lamented. The silence and solitude of the place, and the gloom that always pervades chambers long uninhabited, was in harmony with the state of our feelings: and it was with a sentiment approaching reverence that we paused before the spot where the table once

stood, on which he wrote poems that have found their way all over Europe, and have been translated into many languages.

The power Byron possessed of exciting attachment in those around him was very remarkable, when it is considered how little pains he took to effect it. Even in those who could feel no interest or sympathy in his occupations or fame, this attachment was found to exist; as, for instance, in the man who showed us the Palazzo Guiccioli, and who, being the servant of Count Guiccioli, might be supposed to entertain a prejudice against the person who had rivalled his master.

"And your lady," asked one of our party, "how used she to fill up the long hours in this dwelling?"

"They never seemed long to her, *signora*: for what with her books, and she was nearly as fond of reading as Lord Byron himself, and her embroidery, and her music, she was always employed. She doted on flowers, and an abundant supply was always placed in her apartments; and her clear voice might be heard singing many an hour in the day, like that of some sweet bird in its cage, or reading Dante aloud. And then, when Lord Byron went to visit her in the evenings, those who waited on them said, they used to talk of all they had done through the day: and she used to render him an account of her studies, as a scholar would to a preceptor, and he would smile, and look at her so fondly, and she, poor lady, would appear so happy!"

This naïf picture of the domestic interior of the poet and the object of his tenderness, coming from a source that could not be suspected of misrepresentation, greatly interested us; and the description of the Contessa Guiccioli perfectly harmonised with the impression I formed of her at Rome.

Ravenna, of all the Italian cities, is that which is least frequented by, or known to English travellers. It is to this circumstance that it owes the preservation of its primitive habits and customs, a peculiarity which, in my opinion, greatly enhances its attractions. Few towns in Italy offer more objects of interest to the antiquarian, philosopher, and poet, than does Ravenna; but its geographical position, placing it out of any of the beaten tracks, exempts it from being resorted to by the general mass of strangers who swarm through the other parts of this beautiful land.

The noblesse of Ravenna remember and are proud of the protection afforded by one of their princes, Guido Novello da

Polenta, to Dante; and entertain a love of and taste for literature, not often to be found in a city so remote from what might be considered the more civilized parts of Italy; but which, in truth, are only more populous, and more advanced in the adoption of those luxuries imported by their foreign frequenters. Perhaps it is to this very remoteness, and to the escape from the contagion of modern luxury, which they owe to it, that many of them bestow the time, that might be so much less rationally spent, in the cultivation of literature and the fine arts. Professor Costa, of Bologna, springs from a noble family of Ravenna; and the Marquis Cavalli has given an admirable translation of Tibullus. It is probably to this isolation also, that the good understanding, amounting almost to the feelings of feudal times, but without any of the defects that marked that epoch, are maintained in so remarkable a degree between the aristocracy, the middle class, and the people of Ravenna.

This feeling was strikingly evinced during the last attempt made to change the form of government there, when the noblesse displayed a strong sympathy with the people. The aristocracy of Ravenna are nevertheless considered to be among the proudest of Italy, and, *fière* of their ancient descent, consider themselves far superior to those of the Roman princes, whose titles date only from the pontifical elevation of their ancestors.

A proof of their pride of ancient nobility of birth, and the distinction they consider due to it, is that when the young nobles of Ravenna, of comparatively small fortunes, wish to wed, they think themselves privileged to demand the daughters of the highest families in the other parts of Italy, and with large dowers; nor are their pretensions denied. Hence the aristocracy of Ravenna is allied with the most noble houses of Italy; and the ancient names of Rusponi, Porro, Foscari, Cavalli, Gamba, Guiccioli, and others, whose palaces are still occupied by the descendants of their original proprietors, vouch for the antiquity of the nobility of Ravenna.

Ravenna has gained little since it was ceded to the papal see, in 1529, by the Venetians. Long the seat of empire under the sway of Theodoric, it subsequently was ruled by exarchs, appointed by the Greek emperors, from whom it was taken by the Lombards, and afterwards became the property of the Venetians. The churches bear evidence of its former prosperity, and the cathedral, though modernized, is a good building.

The cupola of the Aldobrandini chapel is painted by Guido, and is very fine, as is also a picture by the same master in the church, representing the Israelites gathering manna.

The church of St. Apollinarus, which is out of the town, is enriched with several columns of Grecian marble of great beauty; and the altar and tribune are peculiarly rich, being incrustcd with oriental alabaster and rare marbles. The ceiling of the tribune is a fine specimen of mosaic, the figures being remarkable for their force and expression.

St. Vitale is a large old building, and has some antique columns of Grecian marble, the effect of which is, however, much impaired by their bases being sunk in the ground. The pavement is very curious; and the mosaics that decorate the choir, as also some *bassi rilievi*, offer very interesting studies to the antiquarian.

The church of St. John has been so modernized that it retains little of its original decoration, and Placidia, its architect, would now hardly recognize it as his work. The beautiful old columns of Cipolline, and some good specimens of *verde-antico* and porphyry, attest its pristine splendour. A portion of the original mosaic pavement is preserved in a chapel, and is said to date from the fourth century. The square is ornamented by two pillars of granite, statues of Clement XII. and Alexander VII., and a curious old statue of Hercules with a globe on his shoulder, which serves as a sun-dial.

The tomb of Theodoric is of a rotund form, the basement and attic serving as chapels. The roof is of granite, and on it four columns stood, on which was placed the sarcophagus of porphyry which is now in the convent of Zoccolanti.

The tomb of Dante arrests the attention of every traveller who visits Ravenna; and, as we paused before it, I gave a sigh to the memory of that sublime poet, whose pages have charmed many an hour.

Few great writers have left behind them a more noble character than that of Dante, whether regarded for the spirit of independence which so peculiarly characterized him,—a spirit that preserved him even when an exile, and deprived of his fortune, from ever submitting to an indignity,—or for the ardent desire to render impartial justice to all parties, in a period of political excitement when few were capable of such conduct. Belonging to, and a warm partizan of the Guelphs, when that faction had succeeded in expelling the Ghibbelines from Flo-

rence, a quarrel arose between two families, the Cerettri, and the Donati; and, at the same time, a similar quarrel occurred at Pistoja, between two branches of the same family, that of the Cancellieri. All of these were Guelphs, but to distinguish the two branches of the Cancellieri, they took the names of the Bianchi and Neri. This faction went from Pistoja to Florence, where their dispute, far from being amicably settled, became widened by the party Bianchi being joined by the Cerettri, and the party Neri by the Donati; an alliance which led to scenes of tumult and disorder in Florence, many accounts of which are to be found in the Italian historians.

The party Neri entered into a treaty with Pope Boniface VIII. to engage Charles of Valois, the brother of Philip the Fair, to come to Florence to tranquillize the troubles there, and reform the government. The party Bianchi, rendered furious by this measure, took up arms, and appealed to the magistrates against their enemies, for having presumed to meddle with the state of the Republic. The Neri also had now recourse to arms, and in their turn applied to the magistrates, complaining that their adversaries had dared to unite and arm without their order, and demanding that the Bianchi should be punished as disturbers of the public peace.

Both factions, now in arms, spread terror through the city. The magistrates, embarrassed how to act, had recourse to Dante, who was one of their body, and who, with equal prudence and impartiality, counselled that the chiefs of each faction should be exiled, the Neri to Piève, and the Bianchi to Sarzana.

The dangerous malady of one of the chiefs, Guido Cavalcanti (a poet as well as a soldier), who fell ill at Sarzana, furnished a pretext, if not a reason, for recalling the Bianchi soon after to Florence, which gave occasion to the Neri to accuse Dante of having favoured the opposite faction all through the affair, and of having rendered ineffectual the measure of calling in the aid of Charles of Valois. The Pope, actuated by selfish motives, caused the entry of that prince into Florence at the head of his troops, and, in defiance of every previous condition, Charles assumed the right of absolute master.

The Neri having now returned to Florence, Dante, who was viewed with an evil eye, not only by them but by the prince also, set off to Rome, in order to endeavour to bring the Pope to more pacific measures. While absent, in the vain endeavour to serve Florence, his enemies excited the people against him,

who, not content with plundering his house, razed it to the ground, and destroyed his other property. His ruin being determined, pretexts were not wanting to justify it. He was sentenced to banishment, and condemned to suffer a fine of eight thousand livres, the payment of which was rendered impracticable by the previous confiscation of all his property. But even this severity had not satisfied the hatred and thirst for vengeance of his enemies, for a second sentence was pronounced, by which he and his adherents were condemned to be burnt alive, if apprehended.

There is not a single impartial historian to be found, who admits that Dante was culpable of the crimes of which he was accused; nevertheless, his whole life was rendered unhappy by the punishment awarded to him; a proof of the injustice too often to be met with where faction influences a government.

Indignant at the treatment he had received, and suspecting that the Pope was at least not ignorant, if not a party to it, Dante hurried to Sienna; where, making himself acquainted with every particular of the steps taken against him, he departed for Arezzo, and there he joined those of the party Bianchi who were exiles like himself. Here he formed a close intimacy with Boson di Gubbio, who ten years previously had with his party also been exiled. From him, Dante received every proof of devoted friendship; and, whether it was this incentive, or the continued persecution of the Pope, that led to it, Dante and his party joined the Ghibbelines, to which Boson di Gubbio belonged; a political tergiversation, not unexampled or inexcusable in times like those in which he lived, when, whatever might have been the desire for consistency, the weakness of parties precluded it; and compelled a recourse to allies of other opinions for strengthening a force which, without their aid, was incapable of resisting the oppression that threatened to overpower it.

The ill success which attended the attempt made by Dante and the other exiles to re-enter Florence, backed by a considerable force, damped if not destroyed his hopes of again being restored to his country; and he retired to Padua, whence he went to Lunigiane, to the Marquess Malaspina, and thence to Gubbio, the residence of his friend Boson.

In 1308, he journeyed to Verona, where he met a kind reception from the Scaligeri, the lords of La Scala, of whose brilliant court he was considered a distinguished ornament;

until the pride, always a characteristic in him, and now, as is ever the case in noble minds, increased into a morbid action by his misfortunes, rendered him disagreeable to those accustomed only to the subserviency of courtiers, and still more so to the persons filling these parts. Nor was Dante a man likely to conceal his sentiments, however injurious to his interests his candour might be. A proof of his plain speaking, which does more honour to his frankness than to his prudence, is related, when, one day in the presence of a large circle of courtiers, one of the Scaligeri asked him "Why it was that many people found a foolish, stupid buffoon more agreeable than him, who was so wise and clever?" Dante replied, "That there was nothing extraordinary in the preference, as similarity of character and sympathy of tastes always engender liking."

It was about the commencement of the year 1320 that Dante went to Paris, and sustained in public his celebrated thesis on the two elements of Earth and Water. On his return to Italy, at the end of the same year, he took up his abode with Guido Novello da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, whose love of literature, and the protection he afforded to all who cultivated it, formed a bond of friendship between him and the great poet, that ended but with the life of the latter.

It is said that the chagrin of not having been able to serve Guido da Polenta, when that prince, at war with Venice, sent him there to negotiate a peace, accelerated, if it did not cause, the death of Dante; for on his return, from this unsuccessful mission, to Ravenna, it was observed that his spirits were greatly depressed. In a few days afterwards he fell ill; and expired in his fifty-sixth year, on the 14th of September, 1321.

He was interred with every possible honour by Guido da Polenta, who himself pronounced a funeral oration on the occasion, in which the genius and high qualities of the deceased were rendered ample justice. The troubles in which this good prince so soon after found himself involved, prevented his fulfilling his intention of erecting a splendid monument to Dante; and it was not until 1483 that the present one was raised by Bernardo Bembo, father to the cardinal of that name.

Dante, like too many poets, was unhappy in his domestic life. His wife, Gemma Donati, was a woman of so violent a temper as to render her ill suited to be the partner of one whose poetical temperament peculiarly unfitted him for exercising



the patience so indispensable to support it with equanimity. His early passion for Beatrice, and the homage rendered to her memory, not only in his first poems, but in his great one, was not calculated to ameliorate the temper of his wife; for though Beatrice was dead before Gemma Donati became the wife of Dante, a dead rival, if remembered with the fondness with which Beatrice was dwelt on by him, may excite as much jealousy in the mind of a wife as could be awakened by a living one.

Pride, too, that besetting sin in a woman, might have increased the violence of temper in Gemma, which so much embittered the home of her husband. That another woman should be the subject of his lasting regret, and most delicate eulogiums, regrets and eulogiums likely to be universally known, from the attractive medium of the fine poesy in which they were enshrined, was enough to ruffle the temper of even a more patient woman than Gemma, who might think that, as a wife, and the mother of his six children, *she* had the best right to be immortalized by his muse. The circumstance, too, of having their only daughter named Beatrice, after the object of his youthful love, must have displeased Gemma; consequently, while we condemn the ill-humour, which rendered the domestic circle of the great poet so miserable, we must not overlook the provocation that may have produced it.

How far may not Dante have been influenced in espousing the party of the Bianchi, by the circumstance that the Neri was the faction to which the Donati adhered? is a question I leave to casuists to decide on; yet motives not more noble have often been known to lead to similar results.

One of the inscriptions on the tomb of Dante is asserted to have been written by the poet himself, during his last illness, and is as follows:—

Jura monarchiæ, superos, Phlegetonta, lacusque  
Lustrando cecini voluerunt fata quousque:  
Sed quia pars cessit melioribus hospita castris,  
Auctoremque suum petiit felicior astris,  
Hic claudor Dantes patriis extorris ab oris,  
Quem genuit parvi Florentia mater amoris.

Another epitaph is,

Exulem a Florentia excepit Ravenna,  
vivum fruens, mortuum colens. Tumulum  
pretiosum Musis, S. P. Q. Rav. jure ac ære  
suo, tamquam thesaurum suum, munivit,  
instauravit, ornavit.

This perpetuates a fact that Florence would gladly obliterate from her annals. Before a century had closed over the death of Dante, the republic of his native city, anxious to atone for the injustice rendered to him when living, wished to erect a monument to his memory, and during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, various applications were made to Ravenna to yield up the ashes of this great poet to Florence; but every effort was in vain, and the city which granted him an honourable asylum during his exile, still preserves his mortal remains.

Alfieri made a pilgrimage to this tomb, and wrote the following sonnet on the occasion :

O gran padre Alighier, se dal ciel miri  
 Me non indegno tuo discepel starmi, <sup>3</sup>  
 Dal cor traendo profondi sospiri,  
 Prostrato innanzi a' tuoi funerei marmi  
 Piacciati, deh! propizio a' bei desiri,  
 D'un raggio di tua mente illuminarmi;  
 Uom che a perenne e prima gloria aspir  
 Contro invidia e viltà dee stringer l'armi?  
 Figlio, i' te strinsi, e ben men duol, che diedi  
 Nome in tal guisa a gente tanto bassa  
 Da non pur calpestarsi co' miei piedi—  
 Se in me fidi, tuo sguardo non abbassa;  
 Va, tuona, vinci, e niun di costor vedi,  
 Non che parlarne; ma Sovr' Esel passa.

With what different emotions are the tombs of those ennobled by genius, or merely illustrious by station, contemplated! Those of the first are viewed with a mournful interest and veneration, as if the buried dead had been personally known to us; while those of the second awaken only historical reminiscences, or reflections of the nothingness of mundane grandeur. Who is it that pauses not with more reverential awe, before the last resting-place of Italy's greatest poet, than before that of Theodoric, once the acknowledged master of Italy? Yet Theodoric was a remarkable man; natural son to Theodimir, king of the Ostrogoths, he distinguished himself when given up as a hostage to the Emperor Leo (by Wilamir, the brother of his father), by the services he rendered to the dethroned monarch, Zeno. Sent into Italy against Odoacer, whom he defeated, he achieved sovereign power, and became the husband of the sister of Clovis, king of France. His celebrated treaty of alliance with the eastern Emperor Anastatius, and

with the Vandals of Africa, put the seal to his renown; but it may be well to consider how far the influence of his secretary, the celebrated Cassiodorus, aided to accomplish his destiny.

What a pity that such a fame should be indelibly stained by the deaths of Symmachus and Boethius, whose fate recurs to the mind when contemplating the tomb of him who caused it! Fearful is the responsibility of sovereigns, not only to their contemporaries, but to posterity; which pronounces an unimpassioned verdict on actions, that during their lives found apologists, if not approvers. Theodoric is said to have wanted in his later days the consolation found by the persecuted Boethius, even in the solitude of a prison.\*

I have seen few places in Italy where I would sooner pass some months than at Ravenna. The tranquil monotony of the town, the beauty of the forest and country around it, and the absence of the travelling English, give it a peculiar charm for me; who like quiet and repose, and enjoy studying the Italians in places remote from the parts frequented by the shoals of strangers who infest this beautiful country; bringing with them those luxurious habits and dissipations, from an association with which the natives shrink, and consequently deprive the more reflecting people who travel from an opportunity of knowing them.

The English, more than all other people, carry with them the habits and customs of their own country. It would appear that they travel not so much for the purpose of studying the manners of other lands, as for that of establishing and displaying their own. Hence a pack of hounds has been established in the Eternal City; and, instead of examining the wrecks of its ancient splendour, many of the English male frequenters gallop over the Campagna all the morning, and recount their prowess at the chace, during the evenings.

The English women, too, evince a no less warm attachment to the customs of their native land. Balls, soirées, and tableaux, *à-la-mode de Londres*, are continually given, where may be seen assembled many of the same faces to be met with at Almack's every spring; wearing the same smiles, and lisping about the fêtes of the previous and ensuing weeks, just as they are wont to do at home. In short, men and women endeavour as much as is in their power to forget, and make

\* See the "Consolationes Philosophiæ" of that admirable writer.

others do so too, that they are dwellers in the "Niobe of nations;" and, though they leave London, take with them all its luxurious habits and dissipations. It is a positive fact that one English lady of fashion proposed to exclude from her circle any individual who should in conversation revert to the works of art or antiquities of Rome. Perhaps she thought with the epigrammatist, that—

To go so far aniques to view must prove half of you asses,  
For if you wish such sights to see just look into your glasses.

FERRARA.—A gloom pervades this once fine, but now dreary town, that harmonises well with the feelings; for who can ever enter it without remembering with sadness the long years during which Tasso pined a prisoner within its walls? Ferrara, like all the other papal towns, has fallen into decay ever since it has been annexed to the Holy See. The streets are nearly deserted, except by melancholy priests, whose flowing garments and large hats remind one of Dom Bartolomeo, in the "Barbière di Siviglia;" and by monks with shaven crowns and sandalled feet, who are seen passing and re-passing.

The inn is execrable, and breathes not of Araby the blest, but is impregnated with the mingled odours of cheese, garlic, and cigars.

We saw the tomb of Ariosto, no longer in its original place, the Benedictine Church, but in the Lyceum, where it now stands.

The library, which owes its foundation to the munificence of a rich citizen of Ferrara, contains a fine collection of books, amounting to not less than some seventy or eighty thousand volumes, and near a thousand MSS. The books are in excellent preservation, and seem to be regarded by the *custode* with that sentiment of reverence due to their merit.

Portraits of the Cardinals of Ferrara are suspended in one of these spacious apartments, among which that of Ippolito d'Este was pointed out to us. I have rarely seen a countenance more indicative of the coarseness generally attributed to him by his contemporaries, than this picture offers; its expression is nearly that of unredeemed brutality, the animal propensities being much more developed in it than the intellectual ones.

One room in the library is devoted to the works of authors

of Ferrara, comprising ancient and modern writers—a patriotic distinction well calculated to encourage talent.

Among the manuscripts in the library, we remarked some cantos of the "*Orlando Furioso*," so marked with corrections as to prove the fastidious taste of, and pains taken by, Ariosto, to render his poem more perfect. His chair and inkstand were shown to us; the first, a plain piece of furniture, made of walnut-tree, and the second, a bronze circular vase neatly executed, on the lid of which is a Cupid holding a finger to his lips; a symbol supposed to indicate the silence that should be observed in amatory affairs. This inkstand is said to have been designed by the poet himself, and is so much admired that copies of it are in great demand at Ferrara. We looked with interest on this little utensil into which the poet so often dipped his pen when describing the paladins, knights, and dames, in his "*Orlando Furioso*."

The manuscript of the *Scolastica*, and of some of the satires of Ariosto, drew our attention; and many of the latter gave proof of assiduity and pains taken by the author in polishing and improving them, as they were marked with corrections in his own hand.

We also saw the "*Pastor Fido*" of Guarini, who was one of the poets whose works shed a lustre on the court of Ferrara. Guarini was not more fortunate in the patronage of the Duke Alphonso d'Este, than were his two gifted contemporaries, Ariosto and Tasso; for though he escaped the misery inflicted on the last, he was, like the first, condemned to pass the best years of his maturity in the performance of missions intrusted to him by a prince whose rewards were very inadequately proportioned to the services he exacted.

One of those missions was to Poland, and for no less an object than to seat the Duke Alphonso on its throne, just then vacated by Henri de Valois, who had succeeded his brother Charles IX. in France. This journey, performed with a wonderful rapidity, and in a country where the accommodation of inns was then little known, drew on the poet a malady that nearly terminated his days.

The letter to his wife, to whom he was fondly attached, still exists, and was written when he believed himself to be dying. In it he exhorts her to arm herself with courage, as the best means of rendering honour to his memory; and to guard their

children from those who had reduced him to the extremity in which he found himself, and prayed her to teach them to imitate their father in all except his fortune.

Does not this letter vouch for Guarini's sense of the ill treatment he had received at a court, in which its sovereign had the ostentatious vanity to wish to exhibit himself as the *Mecænas* of men of genius, without the generosity of really filling the character he assumed?

Guarini did not, however, die in Poland, but on his return from it continued, much against his inclination, to devote a great portion of his time to his illiberal master; in whose service, during fifteen years, he had expended a considerable part of the property inherited from his father. He retired to a country seat of his, tormented by law-suits and the embarrassments into which his affairs had fallen during his frequent and long missions from home,—disgusted with courts, and forswearing the Muses.

His infidelity to these fair dames, whom it is not more difficult to win than to desert, was not of long duration. Aroused into emulation by the praise bestowed on the "*Aminta*" of Tasso, recently given to the public, Guarini took up a work long laid by, and gave the finishing touches to his "*Pastor Fido*." The good taste and generosity which induced him to correct and bring out a copy of the "*Gerusalemme*" of Tasso, tells very much in his favour; for it is not common to find contemporary authors, and above all, poets, anxious to render justice, or draw attention to the merits of each other. In the case of Guarini, as well as in that of Tasso and Ariosto, the Duke Alphonso, while refusing to reward their genius himself, evinced a most unreasonable jealousy when they found more generous patrons elsewhere.

When one reads the life of Guarini, so full of troubles as it was, and with so few consolations, it is impossible not to feel surprise that he could cultivate the Muses with a grace and airiness that would indicate a mind free from care. This example inculcates a belief, that though the imagination requisite for a poet may heighten the sense of the evils he encounters, yet the power of occupying that brilliant faculty abstracts him, at least while engaged in composition, from the bitter realities of life.

From the "*Pastor Fido*" of Guarini, we turned to examine a small volume, containing not above fifty pages of *rime*, and

inscribed, "Alle Signore Principesse di Ferrara." The first line of the opening poem, "*Due Donne Amor m'offerse illustri e rare*," "Love offered, or presented to me, two rare and illustrious women," evidently refers to Eleonore d'Este and her sister the Princess Lucretia; though some imagine it to refer to Lucretia Bendidio, of whom Tasso was said to have been enamoured.

The will of Tasso and some of his letters were also shown us, not one of which indicates the insanity alleged to have been the cause of his confinement; though in one a reference is made to an infirmity, but whether mental or bodily is not stated. The commencement, and indeed the whole of this letter is very melancholy. It is addressed to the Cardinal Bon Compagno, and bears date the 12th of April, 1585. The reference to his malady is contained in the following lines:—"Dopo la prigionia, e l'infermità di molti anni, se le mie pene non hanno purgato gli errori, almeno la clemenza di V. S. Illmà, può facilmente perdonarli;" etc. In this letter, which is two pages in length, he craves the interposition of the Cardinal in his favour with the Duke of Ferrara to procure him his liberty. In another part of his letter the unhappy poet says,—"E benchè sia quasi disperato di risanare nondimeno i salutiferi medicinali, e gli efficaci rimedii, e l'allegrezza di vedermi libero petrebbono ritornarmi nel primo stato."

The other letters are for the most part short, and contain requests for clothes, linen to be washed, books, or to have his money taken care of; for it appears, that, in addition to his other troubles, his prison was not free from thieves. Who can refrain from pity at the notion of this great but unhappy poet being debarred, as it were, from the light of day; and condemned to write minute details of those wants, even for the purposes of cleanliness, that ought to have been amply supplied to him?

The MS. of the "Gerusalemme," corrected by Tasso during his imprisonment, and inscribed at the end "Laus Deo," appealed as forcibly to my sympathy as it had formerly done to that of Alfieri, who wrote on the MS. "Vittorio Alfieri; vide e venerò, 18 Giugno 1783," and is reported to have shed a tear on the paper, the impression of which was pointed out to me by the *custode*.

Who could peruse the following lines, addressed to the Duke Alphonso by Tasso, from his prison, without feeling the deepest pity for the unhappy writer?

“ Piango il morir, nè piango il morir solo,  
 Ma il modo, e la mia fe', che mal rimbomba,  
 Che col nome veder sepolta parmi.  
 Nè piramidi, o Mete, o di mausolo,  
 Mi saria di conforto aver la tomba,  
 Ch'altre moli innalzar credea co' carmi.”

I have just returned from viewing the prison of the hapless Tasso, and a more dreary one can hardly be imagined. The sight of it has increased my sympathy for him and my indignation for his persecutor. Over the door of this wretched cell is the following inscription:—

“Rispettate, O Posterì, la celebrità di questa stanza, dove Torquato Tasso infermo più di tristezza che di delirio divenuto dimorò anni vii. mesi ii. scrisse versi e prose, e fu rimesso in libertà ad istanza della città di Bergamo, nel giorno vi., Luglio 1586.”

The prison is beneath the ground-floor of the Hospital of St. Anna, and is lighted by a grated window that opens into a small gloomy court. This miserable cell is about ten paces in length, and six or seven wide; its height is not more than seven feet. No one could enter it without being convinced that if the unfortunate tenant of it was not insane when he became its inmate, so dreary an abode was well calculated to render him so, and that it must have been intended for a place of punishment and not of cure.

Various and conflicting are the versions and suppositions as to the cause of the severity experienced by Tasso, at the hands of the Duke of Ferrara; nor has time, nor the freedom from fear of being exposed to danger by the publication of any hitherto unrevealed disclosure, rendered the subject less mysterious. The sight of the wretched cell I saw to-day, bears more convincing evidence to me, that *hate*, and not *pity*, led to its being tenanted by Tasso, than all the opinions I have perused on the subject. Had a passion for the Princess Leonora, and an imprudent or insolent display of it, offended the Duke, her brother, surely banishment from the court would have been a sufficient correction for Tasso's presumption; even if he had, as is asserted, dared to embrace the object of his love before the Court. May not the persecution of the poet be more probably accounted for, by the supposition that he had, in the imprudence peculiar to men of genius, said or written something offensive to the Duke himself, and so called down



the vengeance under which he so long groaned a victim? That the Duke was disposed to be tyrannical is implied, if not proved, by the silence of the contemporaries of Tasso on the subject of the cause of his incarceration; for what but a dread of him could have caused this unnatural silence?

Only one of the writers contemporary with the poet attempted to assign a motive for his imprisonment, and this was Faustini; who states a bodily malady, for the cure of which modern surgeons at least would have pronounced such a treatment absurd. What but tyranny could have led the Duke to the unjustifiable act of retaining possession of the poet's work, "*Jerusalem*," and of persevering in his refusal to surrender it? It was to recover this poem that the unfortunate Tasso returned to Ferrara, where, denied access to the presence of the Duke and the Princesses Eleonora and Lucretia, and insulted by the courtiers who consulted only the pleasure of those they served, he forgot every thing but the insults he received. Can it be wondered at, that a man with the true poetical temperament, which to a morbid sensibility unites strong passions, should give way to a rage more natural than its exhibition was prudent; and, influenced by its dictates, utter opinions seldom safely to be expressed in the dominions of a sovereign who can exercise his will with impunity.

The Abate Serassi, who has been suspected, if not accused, of not revealing all that he knew on this point, admits that Tasso had used vituperative language and applied opprobrious names when speaking of the House of Este; and that it was shortly after this violence that he was incarcerated. Surely, this acknowledgment offers a sufficient cause, though not excuse, for the persecution the Duke employed; and when to this motive for hatred is added the dread that if left at liberty the poet might not only escape from his power, but carry to some less ungenerous court the story of his wrongs, the whole mystery of the cause of Tasso's imprisonment is solved.

Perhaps the warm interest evinced in Tasso's favour, and the intercession made for his liberation by so many of the princes reigning in Italy at that time, might have only served to aggravate the dislike and suspicions of the Duke of Ferrara, that, if released, the poet might employ his pen against him. This hypothesis seems supported by the fact, that the Duke of Mantua agreed to answer for Tasso, that if liberated he would attempt no literary vengeance against those who had injured

him ; a security not necessary to be offered, were not suspicions entertained by his oppressor, who, like other tyrants, might have dreaded the retaliation their tyranny excites.

The cell in which Tasso so long pined, has now become an object of deep interest to all who can appreciate genius, or sympathise with unmerited suffering. Many were the names of the visitors, with their tributes to the memory of this poet, that we perused on the walls of his prison. That of our own Byron was looked on with melancholy interest by us ; and those of our much valued acquaintances, Casimir Delavigne and Lamartine, we read with the pleasure always experienced when perusing mementos of persons we esteem.

How the heart sinks when the sufferings of a fellow-creature (a creature, too, whose excitable temperament rendered him peculiarly susceptible of the misery inflicted on him), is brought so vividly before one, by the contemplation of the prison wherein he was immured. As my eyes dwelt on the dingy and bescrewed walls of this dreary cell, to which those of Tasso must have so frequently turned in all the sickness of hope deferred, and bitterness of a deep sense of the injustice under which he was writhing, my feelings became as if for a moment identified with those he must have experienced, and I perpetrated some verses that give a faint picture of his state. How indignantly would the poet spurn this poor endeavour of mine to express his emotions, wanting, as my feeble lines do, the spirit, the eloquence of his glowing pen ; and yet, perhaps, he might have pardoned the weak attempt to describe his sufferings, in consideration of the deep sympathy that originated my attempt at a description of them.

#### SOLILOQUY OF TASSO.

I wake once more :—Another hateful day  
Dawns on my weary life. O false Hope ! say  
Is't thus with all men that the visions fade  
By thee to youth in colours bright displayed ?  
Art thou like *her* who captive made this heart,  
Then laughed to see it writhing 'neath the smart  
Of deep and cruel Love ?—Go, siren, go !  
*Thou art*—a fiend-like mocker of my woe !

Yet glorious, glorious ! were the dreams thou sent  
Of Genius crowned, and Pride, that must relent

To pity, if it might not share my flame  
 When Fame had shed a halo o'er my name !  
 Yes, Leonore ! by such bright dreams upborne,  
 How dread my waking fall—beneath thy scorn !  
 Ah ! when hope whispered of that glorious day  
 Which should the Poet's aching vigils pay,  
 When loud applause should, like the clarion's voice,  
 Bid nations in a new-found star rejoice ;  
 When the rich laurel wreath should twine the brow  
 Where the hired leech seeks trace of madness now,  
 Ah ! then !—when rose the pageant to my mind  
 Where Wit and beauty, Power and Wealth combined  
 (For poets are like sibyls, and can view  
 Unreal things in many a fairer hue  
 Than ever meets the common mortal sight),  
 I turned me from the scene so dazzling bright  
 To seek thy smile, the guerdon that outvied  
 The richest homages of earth beside !

Dreams ! and for ever gone—for Hope has fled,  
 I bade her go—yon pallet is no bed  
 For guest so fair, when man's rude frame must thrill  
 At its hard contact and corroding chill.  
 Ayl—I am turned to stone—so let it be,  
 If thou my form as sepulchre would'st see,  
 Wherein the purest passion is inurned  
 That e'er in ill-requited lover burned !  
 Doth my mind wander ? Shield me, Heavenly Power,  
 Forbid my quivering lips in this dark hour  
 To utter those fantastic thoughts that still  
 Checquer my grim despair—Rise ! stubborn Will,  
 Control vain Fancy—lest my foes proclaim  
 Me mad indeed, and yield me up to shame !  
 Yet madness I would pray for, if it brought  
 A blessed lethargy that banished thought ;  
 Too torturing thought ! as Memory bright displays  
 On her weird mirror hopes of other days ;  
 Yes, I the wretch could envy, whose wreck'd mind  
 No cell can disabuse, no chain can bind,  
 Who deems the grinding chain, the dripping wall,  
 The gold and purple robe, the regal hall ;  
 Ayl those whose outcries lacerate mine ear,  
 And fill mine eyes with dews of grief and fear ;  
 As, goaded by the lash to wild despair,  
 They howl like wild beast hunted from its lair ;  
 Even theirs are lighter pangs than mine—Woe's me !  
 Their bodies only suffer agony !  
 While tortures worse than those of rack or scourge,  
 My mind to dread conclusion ceaseless urge !

Was it for this I left Sorrento's shore,  
 And its blue sea, bright as the sky that's o'er  
 Its orange groves, its sunny slopes and dells,  
 Its rocky caves where sparkle tiny wells,  
 From ocean parted, when the gentle wind  
 Waved the sea back, and kept the rills behind?  
 How oft does memory paint that happy coast,  
 The Eden of our land!—lost to me!—lost!  
 And I could deem its soft gales o'er me sweep,  
 Then wake to see this horrid vault—and weep!  
 My blessed home! there dwells a faithful one,  
 Who recks not of her brother thus undone;  
 Who believes me happy, honoured for those lays,  
 That won from Italy unbounded praise;  
 Thinks that the Duke is proud his court should boast  
 A poet more, to whom he plays the host,  
 With Ariosto linking the high name  
 Of Este to our claims for future fame!  
 My dear, fair sister, little dreamest thou  
 What a grim prison holds thy Tasso now;  
 Shut from the world, dcharred the light of day,  
 Save when aslant shoots in some lonely ray  
 Of the bright sun through yonder mournful grate,  
 And smiles its passing pity for my fate!  
 O! how I joyed in Nature's boundless charms!  
 Not lover flying to his lady's arms,  
 Nor sailor yearning as he nears the shore,  
 To see his birth-place and loved home once more,  
 Such longings know as mine to wander free  
 'Mid thy wide treasures, O Earth!—and see  
 Again the glory hidden from mine eyes,  
 To wake thy echoes—mystic melodies;  
 To feel once—once again thy genial air,  
 Fan this worn cheek, and stir this matted hair;  
 To hound in rapture o'er thy emerald turf,  
 Thy white pearls gather from the foaming surf;  
 To sleep beneath the rich—not gloomy—shade  
 Of orange trees, whose odours bland pervade  
 The fainting sense—to fill my breast with flowers,  
 Fragrant and bright as fill Sorrento's bowers;  
 To see the butterfly with jewelled wing  
 Float in the air—to hear the wild birds sing—  
 To pluck the grape that from the trellis weaves,  
 Or golden citron from its glossy leaves;  
 To feast upon the fig so melting—sweet,  
 Screened from the noontide's enervating heat  
 In some cool grot, with ivy mantled o'er,  
 Where the blue sea is threshold of the door.

O! shall I never more attune my lyre  
 ('Mid scenes that might this tortured heart inspire),

And strive until to verse the power was given  
 To image Nature as the sea does Heaven,  
 When o'er the placid bosom of the deep,  
 Like seraph-armaments the white clouds sweep,  
 For thus the poet's fancy gives again,  
 O earth, and sky! your wealth, not shown in vain!  
 No churls are they your bounties to conceal,  
 But like the flowers whose glowing breasts reveal  
 The light their petals drank—from poets' minds  
 Stream images in you alone he finds.  
 O! had my happier lot been free to rove  
 O'er the glad earth—my heart instinct with love,  
 And inspiration from each bright scene caught,  
 Of land and sea, and Heaven with stars inwrought,  
 And I had left—rich Nature—dowered by thee,  
 Some strains which my best epitaph might be.  
 But here, close prisoned in a dismal cell,  
 The helpless victim of a wizard spell—  
 Branded with madness while this aching brain,  
 Though tortured, feels the falsehood of the stain;  
 Proclaimed a traitor—by my prince abhorred,  
 Judged, crime unproved, without defending word—  
 Light, air, forbid me—all appeal denied—  
 While friends forsake me, and while foes deride;  
 The muse will visit such a wretch no more,  
 The light is quenched—the short-lived music o'er,  
 Faded from earth, its joy, its love, its bloom,  
 Soon may kind Heaven consign me to the tomb.

The melancholy peculiar to the poetical temperament, was one of the early characteristics of Tasso. Few poets have ever escaped this infirmity of genius, though many have had the strength of mind and prudence to conceal its demonstrations. It may furnish a subject of doubt to the casuist, whether the malady is cause or effect of the possession of the divine gift. Like the pearl, which all unite in admiring, and which is produced by the disease of the oyster in which it is found, may not genius be generated by an over-excited and unhealthy state of the mind, in which the imagination predominating over reason, creates ideas brilliant and beautiful; and then, in the re-action of the mental faculties, sinks into a morbid sadness, or gives way to the violence and irritability which too often mark its course?

This sadness or irritation may by ill-treatment be driven into madness; and woe be to the poet who falls into the hands, of those who can neither comprehend the peculiarity of his temperament, nor sympathise with the unhappiness to which

it gives birth! Such persons can see only the fair side of his position, the honours, the fame which he has acquired, and to which they, wanting such distinctions, attach probably more importance than does he who has them. Many a poet has remained ignorant of the degree of fame adjudged to him by his contemporaries; or has had the sweet praise that reaches his ear too often embittered by the harsh censures that accompany it. *They* are insensible to the censure that stings him; and *he* is forgetful of the praise that *they* remember. But even though the applause that flies around may charm him, it cannot bring healing on its wings to the sensitive mind, worked into morbid excitement by the exercise of a faculty that keeps the sensibility ever in undue action, and induces a moodiness or reckless anger, which exposes the poet to be continually misconstrued by those with whom he comes in contact.

Hence it is, that few poets have ever been truly loved, or judged with candour; and the quickness of their perception rendering them aware of the effect they produce on others, make them suspect the truth of the professions of attachment they receive; and attribute to vanity, seeking gratification from an intimate contact with them, those demonstrations of regard, the sincerity of which they cannot help doubting.

Many literary men have experienced this suspicion, a suspicion fraught with pain and humiliation, from the desire, natural to the human heart, to be loved, and the secret dread of not having the power of exciting attachment. The life of Rousseau furnishes abundant proof of this craving for affection, and the indulgence of unfounded suspicions, but too well calculated to impede its duration. Who can peruse his history without being disposed to think that his wayward conduct, and ingratitude towards those who were most inclined to befriend him, must have proceeded from insanity? How much truth is there in the lines of the poet,

" Great wit to madness ever is allied,  
And thin partitions do their walls divide."

Let those who have lived much in the intimacy of people of genius reflect on the peculiarities they have noticed in them, and they will find that suspicion and irritability were the most conspicuous. It is true there are some exceptions, and among them our own Scott is said to be a brilliant example. But the

exceptions do not make the rule; and "I could a tale unfold," from my own knowledge, of the infirmities of men of genius, enough to make the angels weep.

That Tasso's was a peculiarly sensitive mind, tremblingly alive to even the semblance of neglect or unkindness, is proved by various circumstances in his life. How touching is the poem, addressed to the Duc d'Urbino, and written beneath his roof when he sought an asylum there, commencing—

O del grand' Apennino  
Figlio picciolo sì, ma glorioso.

The river Metaura, which flows through the duchy of Nottino, is the son of the Apennine here alluded to. Tasso says he seeks repose beneath the shelter of the great oak watered by that river, alluding to the Duke, in whose armorial bearing the oak was conspicuous. Under that shadow he hopes to escape from the strokes of Fortune, from which, though said to be blind, he finds it so difficult to hide; as she pursues him over mountains and plains, night and day, and who seems to have as many eyes to see, as arms to wound him with. He retraces the misfortunes that have assailed him even from his infancy. "Alas!" says he, "from the first day on which I drew the breath of life, that I opened my eyes to that light which has never been unclouded for me, that goddess, unjust and cruel, has taken me for the object of her strokes. I have received from her wounds which the longest life can scarcely heal. I call to witness the syren near whose tomb my cradle was placed;\* why in the first days of my life, was it not also mine? I was but yet an infant, when unpitying fortune tore from me the bosom of my mother. Ah! I remember, with sighs, her kisses mingled with bitter tears, and her ardent prayers, which the wandering winds bore away. No longer was I to find my face close to hers, pressed in her fond embrace. Alas! I followed with tottering steps, like Ascanius, or the young Camillus, my father wandering and proscribed. O my father! my good father! thou who lookest down on me from Heaven, I wept, thou knowest, thine illness, and thy death. I groaned while I bathed with tears thy bed of death, and thy tomb; and

\* Referring to the fable which places the tomb of a syren close to Sorrento.

now, when elevated to the celestial spheres thou should'st enjoy the happiness owed thee, and not shed tears, it is for me to empty entirely the whole cup of misfortune."

Who can read this effusion of sorrow, bursting from the oppressed heart of such a genius, without pity? The arrival of the Duke of Urbino interrupted the poem, and its author never resumed it.

How touching, too, is the letter addressed by Tasso to his faithful friend Costantini, when he felt his last hour approaching.

"What will my dear Costantini say, when he hears of the death of his dear Tasso? I believe it will not be long before he receives the news, for I feel at the end of my life, not having found any remedy for that painful indisposition which has combined with my habitual infirmities, and which, like a rapid torrent, I plainly see impels me along without my being able to oppose a single obstacle. It is no longer time to talk of the obstinacy of my evil fortune, nor of the ingratitude of those who will at last obtain the triumph of conducting me in indigence to the tomb, at the moment when I hoped that the glory—which in spite of those who desired it not, our age has drawn from my writings—might not have been wholly without recompense for me. I have had myself conveyed to the monastery of St. Onofrio, not only because the physicians consider the air better than that of any of the other parts of Rome, but for the purpose of commencing from this elevated place, and by the conversation of these holy men, my preparation for a conversation in Heaven. Pray God for me, and be assured that as I have always loved and honoured you in this life, I will do also for you in the other, which is the true life, all that suits a true and sincere charity. I recommend you to divine grace, to which I also recommend myself.

"ROME, ST. ONOFRIO."

It is melancholy to reflect that the misfortunes and infirmity of Tasso, far from exciting pity in the heart of the Duke of Ferrara, only drew on his defenceless head a vengeance exemplified in an imprisonment well calculated to increase the malady under which he was said to labour, and abridge the days of the helpless sufferer. Alas! the laurel, which it is asserted can preserve its wearer from lightning, failed to guard Tasso from the blasting influence of his oppressor, and the cruel



treatment he experienced, wrought, as might naturally be expected, the evil it was alleged to be meant to alleviate.

Nor was the governor of the hospital of St. Anne a person calculated to render the situation of his unhappy prisoner less painful, or to give notice of any amelioration in the malady for which he was condemned to be its inmate. This man, Agostino Mosti, by name, was so enthusiastic a disciple of Ariosto, that, probably jealous of the fame of Tasso, which he feared might totally eclipse that of the object of his idolatry, he was little disposed to attend to the dictates of humanity, in fulfilling his duty towards him. He is said to have aggravated greatly the sufferings he might have mitigated.

But as there is seldom a bane without an antidote, Giulio Mosti, the nephew of Agostino, actuated no less by admiration for the genius of Tasso than by humanity, did all in his power to alleviate the severities he could not prevent; and devoted many hours to conversing with the prisoner, listening to the recital of his verses, and to acting as his amanuensis. It was through the medium of this excellent person that the correspondence of Tasso was sustained; and to him he owed the few indulgences that chequered the gloom of his dungeon.

It has been well observed by Ginguéné, in his "*Histoire Littéraire d'Italie*," that during the incarceration of Tasso, under the plea of folly, the strongest proof given of this malady by the unhappy man, was the belief in which he indulged, that the Duke of Ferrara ultimately would render him justice or pity. Actuated by this belief, he addressed various poems to him, as also to the Duchess d'Urbino and the Princess Leonora, in which his misfortune and sufferings were vividly and touchingly described. Nay, such was his confidence in the sympathy of the princesses, that he has even jested on the privations to which he was exposed. Being one night deprived of light in his prison, a cat belonging to the hospital having entered and fixed its eyes on him, which, in the absence of all other light, appeared very brilliant, he affects to consider them as stars, which were to guide him through the tempest; and a second cat having followed the first to his cell, he asserts it to be the Ursa major near the Ursa minor, and calls them his flambeaux, by the light of which he was to write his verses.

The lines written on this occasion prove the fancy and method of the poet, and the absence of the mental infirmity attributed to him—

" Come ne l'oceano, s'oscura e infesta  
 Procella il rende torbido e sonante, &c.

Se Dio vi guardi da le bastonate,  
 Se'l ciel voi pasca e di carne e di latte,  
 Fate mi luce a scriver questl carmi."

But though an exercise of the fancy may be refused as evidence of the sanity of the poet, what can be said to throw a doubt on the healthy state of the mind that produced, nearly at the same time, those fine, philosophical dialogues in the manner of Plato; in which questions of the highest morals were treated with no less powers of just reasoning, than of logical but eloquent precision.

Whatever may have been the cause of the imprisonment of Tasso, and that of insanity is far from being as yet clearly established, the severity exercised towards him must ever remain a blot on the fame of Alphonso II.; and the Princess Leonora finds, and will continue to find, in posterity an interest, as the supposed object of the long and unhappy passion of the poet, that outlives the memory of any other branch of her ancient house.

Among the poems, and they are many, cited as offering proofs of Tasso's attachment to the Princess Leonora, the following is considered to be one of the strongest; as referring, by a graceful simile, to her age, no longer in its spring; by the epithets *Ora*, *Aura*, and *Aurora*, being used to conceal her name, yet to sound somewhat like it; and by the reference to the careless simplicity of her dress, suitable to the delicate state of her health, and to her love of seclusion.

Negli anni acerbi tuol purpurea rosa  
 Sembravi tu, ch' a i rai tepidi allora  
 Non apre 'l sen, ma nel suo verde aneora  
 Verginella s'asconde e vergognosa.  
 O piuttosto parci (che mortal cosa  
 Non s' assomiglia a te) celeste Aurora,  
 Che le campagne imperla e i monti indora,  
 Lucida in ciel sereno e rugiadosa.  
 Or la men verde età nulla a te toglie  
 Ne te, benché negletta, in manto adorno,  
 Giovinetta beltà vince o pareggia.  
 Così è più vago il fior, poichè le foglie  
 Spiega odorate: e'l sol nel mezzo giorno  
 Vie più che nel mattin luce e fiammeggia.

This sonnet could only apply to the Princess Leonora, though it has been said that Tasso was much smitten by the charms of another lady of that name, the young and beautiful Leonora Sanvitalli, but her youth precludes the possibility of its being intended for her. Like all persons with sensitive feelings, Tasso was prone to indulge in sentiments of friendship, if not in affections of a warmer nature, for the fair whom he encountered in society. To Orsina Cavaletti, he addressed his dialogue on the Tuscan poetry; and in honour of her entitled it *La Cavaletta*. *Apropos* of this lady: an amusing picture of the manners of those times is afforded by the fact, that when Tasso publicly maintained a theme of love in the academy of Ferrara, supported by fifty conclusions, she was his most able adversary; and argued scientifically against his assertion, that "it is the nature of man to love more deeply, and with more constancy, than woman."

We saw the court-yard where Parisina and Ugo, rendered better known to the English public by the poem of Byron, than by the account of them to be found in Gibbon's "*Antiquities of the House of Brunswick*," were executed. The fatal and guilty passion of this wretched pair still excites more pity than horror in the breasts of their countrymen; as was evinced by the guide who conducted us to the spot where they expiated it. He remarked that the poor lovers met with too hard a fate, and that the Marquis d'Este was a cruel tyrant to have destroyed them.

Love is, in the mind of an Italian, even in these degenerate days, an excuse for every enormity to which it may lead its victims; a conviction more conducive to make poets of them than good moralists; as nothing can be less calculated to serve the cause of religion and morals, than the belief in which they are so prone to indulge, of the immutable power of Love over Destiny, and the sympathy they express for the punishment of the crimes of those who have yielded to its empire.

This sympathy for lovers, whatever may have been their guilt, I have frequently remarked to be generally experienced by Italians. How far it may be accounted for, or produced by, the excitability of their temperaments, and the warmth of a climate that operates so powerfully on the circulation of their blood, I leave to those better versed in analysing such subjects than I am, to decide: but I am strongly inclined to believe that both these causes have a considerable influence over their

feelings, as the penalty inflicted for other crimes fails to move in them any similar commiseration.

We also saw the houses of Ariosto and Guarini, to which the stranger's attention is attracted by the inscriptions: that to Ariosto is, "Parva sed apta mihi;" and the one to Guarini, "Herculis et musarum commercio—favete linguis et animis."

The interest with which we look on the dwellings once tenanted by those whose works have beguiled many an hour pleasantly, is seldom experienced until they to whom we owed those pleasant hours have left this earth; then it is that we forget their foibles, and remember only the delight found in their works, as we recall to mind the conversation of some old and lost friend with mournful tenderness, oblivious of faults at which, when with us, we murmured.

The chamber is shown in the house of Ariosto, in which the poet, when but a child, played with his brothers and sisters a piece composed by himself, on the subject of Pyramus and Thisbe; giving in his person an example of premature talent not often sustained by the achievements of manhood in other writers. But the productions of the adult justify the predictions entertained of the boy; and though the originality of his "Orlando Furioso" has been questioned,—nay more, that he is accused of having stolen from Boiardo—the praise of genius cannot be denied him.

The wisdom of adopting many of the personages who figure in the "Orlando Innamorato" for the "Orlando Furioso," may well be questioned; as this measure alone was calculated to draw on him the charge of plagiarism. But the *Furioso* *should* rather be looked on as a continuation of the *Innamorato*, than as an imitation; and its style and language are immeasurably superior to those of the *Innamorato*, in which the familiarity, not to say coarseness of the images, is not redeemed by the versification; which has been greatly purified and polished in Berni's version of it, a version that has led to a much more favourable opinion of the production than is warranted by the original.

The character of Ariosto is held in great veneration by his countrymen. Of an incorruptible probity, he possessed many of the qualities rarely attributed to the *genus irritabile* of poets, being not only affectionate, but mild in his domestic relations. An anecdote is related of Ariosto, which furnishes a striking example of the force of the ruling passion, and the all-engross-

ing influence of his literary pursuits over other matters. The father of the poet having been displeased with him, reprehended his conduct with unusual warmth and severity; Ariosto listened to the reproaches with an abstracted air, but replied not, and his father left the chamber. Gabrieli, the brother of Ariosto, who was present, urged the same reprimands that their father had used; when Ariosto immediately satisfied him that the condemnation which he had incurred was unmerited, by explaining the misconception of their parent. "But why not have communicated this fact to our father, and so have exculpated yourself?" was the natural question of Gabrieli. "Because I was thinking all the time he reproached me so angrily, that the scene then passing might be successfully used in the comedy I am writing, '*La Cassaria*;' in which I have introduced an old father admonishing his son, and mine furnished so good a model, that I forgot the actual, in the composition of the imaginative."

Genius and Fortune seldom bestow their favours on the same object; nay more, the fickle dame seems to entertain a peculiar ill-will to those on whom Genius has most propitiously smiled. How few poets have ever been rich, or even blessed with a competency! Is it that a jealousy exists between the two goddesses, producing the melancholy fact that he who enjoys the gifts of the one, must not hope for those of the other? or, is it that Genius, fearful that Fortune might corrupt her children, keeps them for ever out of her way? Ariosto, like the generality of the sons of Genius, had little to boast of any other kindness, save that lavished on him by her; but, unhappily, her dazzling gifts, though they lead to fame and secure the good will of posterity, do not often defend their possessor from the bitter pangs of poverty, or the still more bitter ones entailed by dependence. Allied by the ties of kindred to the ducal family of Ferrara, he found but a niggard and rude patron in the Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, whose brutality of speech when the poet presented him his works, not even the change in the phrase by Tiraboschi has been able to excuse. Vexed at the refusal of Ariosto to accompany him into Hungary, there to remain for two years, at a time when neither the health nor the finances of Ariosto were in a state to admit of such a step, he treated him with marked coldness, and left him to seek the protection of the Duke Alphonso.

This protection, like that extended by this prince to other

poots, left Ariosto little indebted for any substantial benefits; though manifold were the services he rendered to his patron, who employed him on several missions, demanding not only zeal, but tact and judgment.

Ariosto's sense of the illiberal treatment which he experienced from his patrons, is strongly indicated by a device of his, on which was represented a bee-hive, from which a rustic was expelling and destroying its inmates by the smoke of a straw fire, in order to extract the honey they had made; the motto was *Ex bono malum*.

Though professing to like his works, and certainly vain that his court should possess their author, the Duked'Esto, far from bestowing the means of a comfortable existence on Ariosto, which would have enabled him to devote his time to the Muses, permitted him to be tormented through long years by every species of pecuniary embarrassment; and so precluded him from bequeathing to posterity works, which, judging from those he had written, would have greatly added to his fame.

It is deplorable to think, that while Alphonso could find money to build a theatre, in order that the comedies of Ariosto should be produced with greater *éclat*, and spared no expence in the decorations of it, he, for whose works this expense was incurred, was suffered to remain, if not in actual indigence, at least in great pecuniary embarrassment. The comedies performed in this new theatre were "La Cassaria," "I Suppositi," "Il Negromante," and "La Lena;" some written in his early youth, and the others many years previous to their being enacted.

Ariosto's temper, though generally mild, could occasionally be excited into warmth. An instance of this disposition is related, which evinces that, though docile to the counsel and criticism of his literary friends, to which he is said to have listened with a patience not often found in authors, he could be aroused into anger, if his *amour propre* was wounded. Passing one day the shop of a potter, he heard the luckless workman reciting some of his verses, in a manner that greatly deteriorated their merit, which so enraged him that he broke several of the vases. When the potter complained of the injury he had sustained, the angry poet declared that his vengeance had been but too mild in destroying a few worthless vessels, as a punishment for their master's having destroyed his beautiful verses.

An instance of the esteem with which the poet was regarded

by his countrymen, even those amongst them supposed to be the least likely to be moved with veneration for him, is recorded. When governor of Garfagnana, an appointment conferred on him by the Duke Alphonso d'Este, after the death of the Cardinal Ippolito, he found that province beset by rebellious men, who had taken up arms against their sovereign, and leagued with the brigands and smugglers who had long infested the neighbourhood. Having one day occasion to pass through a wood, followed only by a few attendants, he encountered a formidable number of armed men, who, to his great surprise, and no less satisfaction, permitted him and his attendants to pass them unmolested; the captain of the band merely demanding of one of the servants the name of his master. No sooner had he learned that it was Ariosto, than he followed him, to the no slight alarm of the poet, who, however, drew up and awaited his pursuer; who approached him with every demonstration of profound respect, and offered his apologies for having, through ignorance of who he was, suffered him to pass his troop without paying him the homage so justly due to his merit.

Another example of his extraordinary popularity is told, which occurred also while he was governor of Garfagnana. Having one morning, in a fit of abstraction, wandered forth from the castle in his robe-de-chambre and slippers, he was not conscious of his imprudence, till, at a considerable distance from any habitation, he found himself made a prisoner by a troop of banditti, who were proceeding to use violence towards him, when one of the lawless band, recollecting the face of Ariosto, informed his companions. The captain of the brigands\* saluted him in the most respectful terms, assuring him that the author of the "*Orlando Furioso*," had nothing to fear, and insisted on escorting the poet in safety to the castle; expatiating while they pursued the route, on the various fine passages of that poem, with many of which the men displayed an intimate acquaintance, and loading its author with praise.

PADUA.—There is something in the solitude and silence of this place that pleases me. It seems to respire the repose, I will not call it dulness, peculiar to towns containing universities; and the inhabitants have in their air and manner a gravity that harmonises well with the character of the town. Two rivers

\* Pacchione.

flow through Padua, which not only beautify but add to its healthiness.

The Paduans attribute the foundation of their town to Antenor, and resent as an insult any doubt on this point.

Whether regarded for its ancient origin,—an origin of which even Tacitus relates that its natives were so proud, and which Virgil notices in his *Æneid*, i. 242, or for having founded its splendid neighbour, Venice, Padua must always be viewed with interest. Allied with Rome in the glorious days of the imperial city, it was, like her, preyed on by the barbarian hordes who invaded Italy, and was compelled to bow to the yoke of her enslavers. Leagued in after years with the states of Mantua, Ferrara, Verona, and Vicenza, it shared the fate common to all republics, that of frequently groaning beneath a tyranny, under the name of liberty, more despotic than is to be encountered in most monarchical governments.

Here dwelt James Carrara, one of the rulers of Padua, but, like his son Francis, better remembered as the friend of Petrarch, and as having encouraged the revival of literature.

Padua has long been distinguished for her love of science, and for her university. But in addition to that celebrated college, not less than seven academies were established, among the members of which were reckoned Alessandro Piccolomini, Benedetto, Varchi and Sperone Speroni, Guarini and Torquato Tasso.

One of these academies, that to which Guarini and Tasso belonged, was founded by Scipio Gonzague, who afterwards became cardinal. Another was composed wholly of the noblesse, who applied themselves solely to acquiring the science of chivalry, and feats of arms; pursuits which, unlike those of the other academies, have left no trace behind, and only serve to induce comparisons between the tastes of the two classes, little creditable to the aristocracy of Padua.

The circumstance of Gianvicenzo Pinelli having fixed his residence at Padua, contributed not a little to the encouragement and development of science and literature here. Devoted to both, he collected around him, and aided all who were calculated to advance them, and spared neither trouble nor expense in the formation of a library, the stores of which were ever open to those who wished to consult them. It would be difficult to imagine a life more rationally, usefully, and agreeably spent, than that of Gianvicenzo Pinelli, surrounded by *savants* and



students, who found beneath his roof the most valuable books, the rarest manuscripts, the best astronomical and mathematical instruments, and a friend ever ready to advance the interests of science and literature, and of those who cultivated either.

This noble library, collected with such pains and trouble, was unhappily dispersed; for having bequeathed it to Naples, his native city, three vessels were laden with the valuable freight, which was to be delivered to his heirs at that place. One of them was captured by the corsairs, who, ignorant of the worth of their prize, threw the greater portion of the books overboard; while the rest were scattered on the coast of Fermo, where the fishermen employed them for stopping the holes in their boats, or for other ignoble purposes. Luckily, the bishop of Fermo discovered this fact, and used every effort to collect the remaining portion, which he shipped for Naples; where they were afterwards sold for a very large sum to the Cardinal Borromeo, nephew to the saintly and celebrated Archbishop of Milan of that name. I quote one of my favourite writers, Ginguéné, on this subject, and from memory, not having seen his admirable "*Histoire Littéraire d'Italie*," for a long time.

The town has some fine buildings, and the streets, though for the most part narrow, are remarkably clean. The arcades, which line each side of most of the streets, add to the gloominess of their aspect, but render them more picturesque.

The town-hall, or palace of justice, is considered the largest in Europe; the roof is unsupported by columns, pillars, or arches, and its effect is very imposing. In it is a monument to Titus Livius, who was a native of Padua, ornamented with a bust and complimentary inscription, remarkable for the exaggeration not unfrequently to be found in Italy; as regret is expressed that the means of the erectors of the monument permitted them not to form the bust of gold, instead of marble.

A stone coffin, evidently the work of the dark ages, and probably the depository of the bones of some monk, is shown as that of Livy; and the expression of any doubt of the authenticity of the relic gives great offence.

The tomb of Antenor was next pointed out to us, and was exhibited with no trifling complacency by our guide; who was so proud of it, that I could not bring myself to damp his pleasure by avowing my incredulity as to its being other than some monument erected in the middle ages.

The abbey of St. Giustina next attracted us. Its church, li-

brary, and refectory do credit to Palladio; and its interior decorations are at once rich and chaste, a commendation that can rarely be bestowed on Italian churches. The martyrdom of St. Giustina, by Paul Veronese, is a fine picture; but much the contrary is a dead Christ, by some artist whose name I forget.

The Prato della Valle, in front of St. Giustina, from its vast extent adds much to the effect of the building; and the domes, not less than eight in number, give it an oriental air. The Prato della Valle is a large square of grass, intersected with flagged walks, with a small canal surrounding it. On both sides of this canal are placed the statues of the celebrated men who have been educated at Padua; and stone benches, various monuments, and vases, are intermingled with an abundance of trees and flowering shrubs, rendering the place a very agreeable promenade to those who desire the enjoyment of tranquil contemplation, rather than the bustle of busy life.

Nowhere have I seen a town that is more calculated to suit the habits of a grave and reflecting person, than Padua; or where the studies of the occupants of a university were less likely to be interrupted by the seductions of gaiety. The church of St. Antonio, the patron saint of Padua, is an old Gothic building, containing the usual number of shrines, founts, pictures, and other ornaments, and more than the usual number of organs, having no fewer than four.

In this church are preserved the relics of its titular saint, much resorted to by devotees, who purchase small medals inscribed with an image, and blessed by a priest, to which they attach much veneration.

The monument of Bembo pleased me by its simplicity. The cardinal was a true lover of literature and a friend to its votaries, with some of whom, Ariosto among the number, he lived in habits of cordial intimacy. The inscription on the monument is as follows :—

*Ne cujus ingenii monumenta  
Eterna sunt, ejus corporis quoque  
Memoria posteritati desideretur ;*

and accords well with its unaffected style.

The university is not an extensive building, but exhibits the fine taste of the architect, who contrived in a limited space to introduce an elegance and fitness, often found wanting in larger

odifices. The court, cloister, and galleries bear out this assertion, and reflect great credit on Palladio.

In the vestibule is a statue of Helena Lucrezia Cornaro Piscopia, celebrated for her various and extraordinary acquirements, and said to have been remarkable for her beauty. This lady is reported to have vied with the inimitable Crichton, in the extent and variety of her accomplishments; and to have emulated Corinne in reciting her own poetical productions. Her piety is said to have been as remarkable as her learning; and her constant practice of it was not impaired by the rare distinction of Doctor of Philosophy of the University, which was conferred on her. It was probably the desire of not endangering her philosophy, that led to her rejection of the numberless suitors who, undismayed by her profound erudition, sought her hand. Whatever may have been the motive, she continued to lead a life of "single blessedness," and shrouded her beauty in the austere guise of a *religieuse*, devoting those hours, passed by the generality of her sex in the adornment of their persons or in light amusements, to the study of the learned languages, in which she became an adept, and to the attainment of sciences, seldom sought after, and still more seldom mastered, except by male students.

Padua, so famed for the encouragement it afforded to scientific men, extended also its protection to those of the gentler sex, who devoted themselves to similar pursuits, its ancient academy, the *Ricovrati*, being alike open to them. How far this protection may tend to increase the happiness or usefulness of women, is a knotty point, which I leave casuists to debate; but at the risk of drawing down on my head the indignation of those of my sex, who think that we should have equal privileges with men, I must confess, that the advantages to be derived from a scientific education, and an admittance to a university, would, in my humble opinion, be more than counterbalanced by the loss of that feminine delicacy and timidity, which constitute the most attractive charms of woman. All that is requisite for us to know, may be acquired in the privacy of our paternal homes; and I should no more think of sending a daughter of mine to an academy, to study abstruse sciences, similar to those taught to men, than I should of having her instructed in those athletic exercises so necessary to be acquired by those, who are born to be our protectors and defenders.

In this university, many celebrated men have been educated.

Among the most distinguished may be named Galileo and Christopher Columbus; names that make one look at it with reverence.

The observatory, rendered so interesting by having been used by "the starry Galileo," in the pursuit of his scientific researches, is a great attraction to every stranger who visits Padua. Here he made some of those discoveries which have immortalized his name; and as I looked from the spot, whence he too had often contemplated the heavens, I sighed at the fate reserved for such a man; and was thankful for living in times when bigotry can no more curb the advance of science, or punish those who promote it. The observatory is constructed on the top of a high tower, once the scene of many of the cruelties of Eccelino, the tyrant of Padua.

Padua has given birth to the grammarian Asconius Pedianus, junior, to the poetess Isabella Andreini, and to our own contemporary, Belzoni, the Egyptian traveller, with whom I am well acquainted.\*

Of all the honours awarded to genius, the one which least pleases me is that of preserving, as a memorial of it, portions of the frail and perishable mortal coil in which it was encased on earth; yet this appears to be a favourite mode of rendering homage to it, in Italy; for at Florence I saw the finger of Galileo, pointing to the heavens, whose starry lore he had so profoundly studied; and at Padua they show a vertebra of his. Strange infatuation, to remind us, by the wrecks of mortality, of that which is immortal—genius!

The library of the university is very rich, and the view of it is enough to tempt one to make a long sojourn at Padua, in order to explore at leisure the dusky, not dusty, tomes it contains. The repose and silence of the place, so well calculated to assist the mind in its efforts to acquire knowledge, increase the desire to remain here; and I could loiter many a week, nay month, in this dull and secluded spot, without feeling time hang heavily on my hands. A portrait of Petrarch is shown in the library, a place which in life he would have liked to rest in, surrounded by books, in which he so much delighted.

One of the peculiar attractions of Padua for me, is the number of old-fashioned houses surrounded by gardens, which are to be found within its walls; looking as secluded and as quaint

\* Since dead, and buried at Padua.

as if they were many miles from any town, and that their occupants, during the last century, had carefully refrained from changing their sober but pleasing aspects. This mixture of foliage and flowers, introduced between spires, domes, and ancient buildings, has a charming effect, and I lingered at the gates of some of these houses, half tempted to envy their owners.

The cathedral has nothing very attractive about it, unless it be the picture of a *Madona*, by Giotto, bequeathed by Petrarch to *Francesca Carara*.

VENICE.—How shall I turn from the objects that court my attention on every side, to note those that attracted it on the route between Padua and Mestré? The road is parallel with the straight and formal banks of the Brenta, which much more resembles a canal than a river, and is dotted with villas, chiefly belonging to Venetians, who resort to them to pass the *villogiatura*. They remind me of the old pictures by Dutch masters, in which clipped trees, straight walks, and as straight canals, constitute the general features.

The Brenta being navigable, the inhabitants of these formal villas enjoy (for to them I am told it is a positive enjoyment) the sight of the heavy lumbering boats, that daily pass and re-pass close to their windows,—a circumstance that would be found so objectionable to the more fastidious taste of my compatriots.

Nothing can be more grotesque than the marble and stone figures that decorate the fronts of these villas, and are placed on the walls and gate-posts that enclose them. Every species of bodily deformity to which flesh is heir has been represented in these misshapen creations of a depraved imagination; and seen between the stunted and clipped trees with which they are intermingled, the effect is infinitely more strange than agreeable. A deep dyke sometimes shuts out a view of the river from the basement stories of these houses, but this is still more cheerless than the sight it excludes. I thought of our beautiful villas in dear England, hid amid umbrageous trees feathering down to velvet lawns, or reflecting their picturesque fronts in the glassy bosom of the broad and limpid rivers which glide sinuously and gracefully along; instead of being pent in, as here, between two steep and straight banks, that convert them into the appearance of canals.

All this I thought of and much more, until my heart yearned

for that land, whence I have now been six long years an exile, until I had entered the boat at Mestrè, which was in readiness to convey us to Venice; and from that moment—shall I confess the fact?—I could think of nothing but the scene around, and the still more exciting one, we were rapidly approaching.

How strange, yet how beautiful was the first view of Venice! It seemed in the distance like a floating city, its domes, spires, cupolas, and towers, glittering in the sunbeams, and looked so glorious, that I could have fancied it one of those optical illusions presented by a mirage. As we entered the grand canal, the reality of the scene became impressed on my mind; and the grandeur of the houses, with the rich and solid architectural decorations lavished on them, formed so striking and melancholy a contrast to the ruin into which they are fast falling, that the scene awakened feelings of deep sadness in my breast. The palaces looked as if the touch of some envious wizard had caused them to decay, long ere Time the destroyer would have scathed them; and this premature ruin has in it something much more mournful than that gradually effected by the lapse of years. Windows, whose architraves are supported by caryatides of exquisite sculpture, are blocked up in the rudest manner; and out of them protrude the iron pipes of German stoves, sending forth their murky vapours to the blue and cloudless sky whose purity they profane. Over balustrades of marble, where once beauty loved to lean, float the unseemly nether garments, suspended to be dried, of the Teutonic inhabitants who now fill those sculptured dwellings with the mingled odours of cigars and garlick; and mutter the guttural sounds of their language, where once the dulcet ones of the softest of all the Italian dialects were wont to be heard.

The canal, too, over which our boat glided, bore evidence of the fallen state of the once proud Venice; for a green opaque slimy substance half-choaked its water, sending out a most unsavoury smell, as the oars disturbed its unhealthy deposits. Alas! like anticipated happiness which looks so bright in the distance and loses its charms when approached, Venice, when entered, disappoints, and inspires only gloomy reflections; its very beauty rendering its decay more painful to be witnessed.

The gondolas with their funereal trappings, dashing by us over the opaque water, looked as if freighted with the dead owners of the half-dismantled palaces we passed, so lugubrious are their appearance: yet this very sombreness is in harmony

with all around, for aught of gay, or brilliant, would offer too violent a contrast to the scene. The very brightness of the azure sky above this fast decaying, yet still magnificent city, renders its aspect more touching, and one feels disposed to turn from it with much of the same emotion with which we would shut out the garish sun, when its beams fall on the coffin of one beloved, while it is journeying to the grave.

Venice more than realises my expectations, though they were highly excited by all that I had read, and by the pictures of Canaletti. But even these last, though accurate representations of the spots portrayed, fall short in conveying a just notion of their beauty; so much does the reality gain by the clearness of the atmosphere, and by the strong and beautiful contrasts of the surrounding light and shade.

I remember, many years ago, when a fine Canaletti hung in one of the rooms I occupied, that I used to long, when my eyes dwelt on it, to see Venice, and compare the original with the copy. The moment then hardly hoped has now arrived, but instead of the pleasure anticipated, a sadness has stolen over my spirit, at beholding the rapid encroachment of decay; just such a sadness as that with which I have marked the ravages of consumption in some lovely being, whose still remaining charms showed what she must have been previously to its baneful approach.

Venice appeals even more powerfully to the imagination than Rome itself. Is it because the days of its splendour are so much less remote? It may be so, for we are so egotistical in our nature, that our sympathies are more strongly excited for all which comes nearer to our own times, than for that which is separated from us by a lapse of centuries. I remember my dear and witty friend Jekyll telling me that he never could read a romance in which the mention of corselets, shields, spears, or other warlike implements of the olden time occurred. "I can take no interest in the scenes of such books," said he; "my attention droops, and I care not which of the knights is vanquished, or which of the dames is rendered wretched; nevertheless, I can feel a lively sympathy in a good novel, in which a story of my own time is related, and have experienced not a little inquietude about the fate of some hero, such as one might meet with in the world; or some heroine, between whom and some beauty of my own day I could institute a comparison."

Our hotel, the Leone Bianco, is an excellent one; the apartments spacious and well furnished, and the *cuisine* remarkably good. By the Austrian rules, no innkeeper can furnish his guests with French wine at their dinners, a privation much complained of by many of them.

A cake peculiar to Venice, and called *focachio*, is in deserved repute here, and is, when served hot, a most palatable addition to the breakfast table.

One of our sitting rooms has a bay window to it, which protrudes over the canal, affording extensive views up and down this watery street. This bay window forms a little room, as it were, being separated by glass doors from the *salon*, which has other windows to light it, and here I have intrenched myself, and am now noting down my thoughts.

But our gondola waits, and I must throw down my pen, to go forth and see the marvels of this marvellous city, ere I have yet been able to write even a small portion of the impressions that crowd on my mind—impressions so vivid, yet multiplied, that it seems as if those of years had been compressed into a few hours, and that the head ached from the bright chaotic mass that had been presented to its tenant, the brain.

The Piazza of St. Mark has no parallel; how beautiful, how gorgeous it is! I can well understand the feelings of the English child, who, on beholding it for the first time, asked her mother if people were permitted to see it every day, or only on Sundays. The eye is dazzled by the splendour that meets its gaze, and turns from the palace of the Doges, with its dentellated architecture, sculptured balconies, and arabesques galleries, to the church of its tutelary saint, with its mosque-like domes glittering in the sun, and round which countless pigeons are seen flying, their gay and varied plumage, as they shoot through the air, looking as if dyed with prismatic hues.

I stood contemplating this grand picture in speechless wonder and admiration, until my eye fell on the tall masts that formerly bore the standard of St. Mark, that standard rendered glorious by having so often been borne triumphant over the sea, now replaced by the Austrian spread eagle. This sight jarred painfully on my feelings, and recalled me from dreams of the brilliant past of Venice, to the humiliating present.

The origin of Venice assuming the standard of St. Mark, offers one of the most remarkable of the various examples of superstition that characterised that age. In the year 827, a



church in Alexandria, which contained the remains of the saint, was to be demolished, that its rare marbles might be used in the decoration of a palace then erecting. Some Venetian ships being then at Alexandria, the captain of one of them, after much persuasion, prevailed on the priests, to whom the care of these precious relics was confided, to resign them to him. So great, however, was the sanctity attached to them, and so many were the miracles attributed to their influence, that the people held the memory of the saint in the highest reverence, and it was known that they would warmly resent the loss of his remains. The utmost secrecy was consequently necessary in removing the body; the priests opened the case in which it was enclosed, and the linen in which it was wrapped, and, withdrawing the earthly remains of St. Mark, introduced in its stead those of a female saint that happened to be conveniently at hand.

The sacrilege was, however, very nearly revealed by the rich odour with which the whole church became impregnated the moment the envelopes of St. Mark were opened, and which drew around the spot a crowd of worshippers, who insisted on examining the precious deposit. So adroitly had the transfer been effected that the people were deceived, and dispersed in the belief that they still possessed the treasure they so highly appreciated. But now came the difficulty of conveying the precious relics to the ship which was to bear them to Venice, a service not exempt from great danger, and to accomplish which, recourse was had to a mode not a little profanatory to them. They were placed in a huge basket covered over with joints of pork, and the person who carried it cried aloud "khanzir!—khanzir!"\* an announcement that insured them an unmolested passage, the Mussulmans avoiding even the possibility of contact with this prohibited flesh.

When on board, the basket was wrapped in one of the sails, and elevated to a yard-arm of the main-mast, where it remained until the vessel sailed. A terrible storm occurred, during which the vessel was in such imminent danger that it would have been lost had not the saint appeared, and instructed the captain what measures to employ.

Sabellico relates this event with due gravity, and during many years it received implicit belief at Venice. The uni-

\* Hog

versal joy diffused by the arrival of these precious relics was increased by the fact being considered as the fulfilment of a vision with which the saint himself was visited when, many years before, he touched on the spot, then uninhabited, but on which Venice is now built ; in which vision it was foretold him that his mortal remains should in after ages find a resting-place where they were now brought.

Public processions, prayers, and every possible demonstration of joy marked the disembarkation of these holy relics. The saint was invoked as the protector of Venice ; his effigy, or the lion, which is his symbol, was impressed on her coins, and displayed on her standards ; and the national cry thenceforth became "Viva San Marco!"

Another object, too, is well calculated to turn the thoughts from the splendour of St. Mark into a more painful channel. Who can look at the Piombi without remembering with horror the sufferings inflicted there on the wretched mortals condemned to drag on an existence rendered nearly insupportable by its intolerable heat and the impossibility of standing upright. How many victims have there pined in agony, helpless and hopeless ! It makes the heart sick to think of such complicated misery, and all this endured so near the bright and gorgeous scene I was contemplating, a scene where the rich and gay flocked daily and nightly in the pursuit of pleasure.

These violent contrasts between human misery and luxury, brought so closely together, and yet like parallel lines never touching, have in them something very revolting to the feelings ; and mine became sobered down from warm admiration of the beautiful Piazza San Marco, to a melancholy mood, as my gaze reverted to the Piombi.

The silence of Venice constitutes, in my opinion, one of its greatest charms. This absence of noise is peculiarly soothing to the mind, and disposes it to contemplation. I looked out from my balcony last night, when the grand canal reflected a thousand brilliant stars on its water, turbid though it be ; and the lights streaming from the windows on each side, showed like golden columns on its bosom. Gondola after gondola glided along, from some of which soft music stole on the ear, and sometimes their open windows revealed some youthful couple with their guitars, or some more matured ones, partaking their light repast of fruit and cakes ; while not unfrequently a solitary male figure was seen reclined on the

seat, absorbed in the perusal of some book. The scene realised some of the descriptions of Venice read years ago ; and except that the gondolas were small in number, and the lights from the houses few and far between, I could have fancied that no change had occurred since the descriptions I referred to were written. The morning light reveals the melancholy alteration ; and as I stood on the same balcony to-day, and saw the muddy canal with a few straggling gondolas gliding over it, the defaced and mutilated palaces, and the reduced population, all brought out into distinctness by the bright beams of the sun, I could hardly believe it was the same scene that looked so well last night. Moonlight is a great beautifier, and especially of all that has been touched by the finger of decay, from a palace to—a woman. It softens what is harsh, renders fairer what is fair, and disposes the mind to a tender melancholy in harmony with all around.

The endless variety in the architecture of Venice pleases me. It looks as if the natives of many lands, and as many ages, had congregated to build dwellings and churches according to the different tastes of each ; for here may be traced the massive piles and round arches of remote times, the fantastic and grotesque style of the middle ages, the richly decorated Saracenic, and the stately buildings whose fronts are incrustured with fine sculpture, that even still retain their pristine beauty.

Where but at Venice could be found crowded together specimens of the Greek, Roman, Gothic, and Saracenic styles, blending into rich masses, rendering this city a place where every traveller may find some remembrances of his home ?

The arcades of the Piazza of St. Mark present an amusing picture, being appropriated to cafés, and shops principally jewellers', the windows of which glitter with trinkets, tempting many a bright-eyed Venetian maid and matron to loiter before them in longing admiration, while groups of people, dressed in the garbs of their different countries, from the turbaned Turk and quick-eyed Greek down to the staid and soberly-attired Englishman, are seen moving along, giving the scene life and animation.

This moving mass of the natives of so many countries accords well with the equally heterogeneous masses of architecture beneath which they are seated ; and though this extraordinary mixture of style in the buildings cannot be defended as examples of pure taste, nevertheless the effect is, at least to me, very

delightful; and while gazing on it, I find myself no more disposed to censure it than I should be to decry a bed of rare tulips of various hues, because their variety was more rich than chaste.

This strange mixture of architecture seems to tell the history of its origin. Might not the victorious Venetians, returning from distant lands, have wished to perpetuate the memory of their achievements, by imitating the buildings beheld there? and this jumble, so censured by connoisseurs, may have had a peculiar charm for them, by reminding them of past glory. But though, without this *prestige*, I confess (though by so doing I give reason to have my taste called in question) I greatly admire the general effect of the Piazza of St. Mark; and that this very *mélange* is perhaps one of the causes of my admiration, so novel yet so gorgeous is its appearance.

The interior of the church of St. Mark is more curious than beautiful. It reminds one of the painter, who not being able to render his Venus lovely, made her fine; for a profuse expenditure of the most costly materials have failed to produce a good effect. Nevertheless, the want of light, the multiplicity of ornament, and, above all, the grim yet gaudy figures in mosaic, starting forth in meretricious relief from the gilt-covered walls, have a mystical appearance that takes one back to the dark ages, when the grotesque was invested with an almost solemn character by the superstitious artists of the olden time.

Here are collected the spoils of many countries, as well as the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Venetian art: productions demonstrative of the chaste elegance of the Greek chisel are contrasted by some gaudy specimen of Byzantine taste. The thirty years' labour of Sansovino, the gate on which is perpetuated, in bronze, the likeness of that Aretino, to write whose licentious satires required that his nature should have partaken largely of the qualities of the metal on which his features are here stamped, finds no pendant in the door of the baptistry, studded over with saints and legends, and said to have been brought from Constantinople. The innumerable columns and pillars of the rarest marbles, the gilded arched roofs, the pavement of porphyry and jasper, in some parts incrustated with turquoises, the glowing ultra-marine mingled with gold and the Mosaic, called the *pala d'oro*, the effect of which is wonderfully rich, together with the numberless statues scattered around, give St. Mark's the appearance of the palace of some necromancer; who,

forbidden the light of Heaven, had enriched his subterranean dwelling, for such its darkness makes it look, with all of rich and rare that could console him for this privation.

Nor does the fierce lion rampant, placed over the second arch of the entrance, as if to guard the approach, decrease the appearances just alluded to; for instead of recognising in it the symbol of the saint, as portrayed in the vision of Ezekiel, it might be taken for the picture of some *familiar* of the wizard, menacing all intruders on his privacy.

The statue that most pleased me in St. Mark's is that of the Virgin, the work of Alberghetti, in the chapel in which is the monument of Cardinal Zeno, executed by the brothers Lombardo and Leopardo.

"The dim religious light," or rather, let me say, the want of light in St. Mark's gives the church so peculiar and mystic a character, that, while in it, I remembered some passages in Dante, of which the scene reminded me very forcibly; and I became sensible of how much awe may be inspired by the agency of this sort of twilight, which, by only revealing indistinctly distant objects, leaves so much to the imagination.

When the tomb of Andrea Dandolo was shown me, I for a moment took it to be that of his more illustrious ancestor, Enrico Dandolo, the glory of whose actions often warmed my heart in the days of my youth. How frequently did I picture to myself this hero, venerable from age,\* and nearly sightless, kneeling before the high altar, and fixing the cross on his ducal cap, while, with tears coursing down his cheeks, he acceded to the prayers of the Venetians to lead them to the holy war. How simple and touching was his speech, as it is recorded, wherein a firm confidence of his own merit is expressed with a *naïveté* that takes from it all appearance of vain-glorious presumption. — "Signors, I am a very old man, feeble in health, and more needing repose than glory; yet knowing no one more capable of guiding and commanding you than myself, who am your lord, if it be your will that I should take the sign of the cross, to lead and watch over you, and leave my son in my place to protect our country, then will I gladly go, and live and die with you, and with the pilgrims."

Enrico Dandolo was one of the favourite heroes of my youth;

\* He was then in his 84th year.

and so indelible are the impressions stamped on the ductile mind of early life, that among the mass of associations and memories which crowded into my brain as I entered Venice, none stood so prominently forth as that of this glorious old man, with his buskins tinged with imperial purple; a distinction permitted to him, when the title of Despot of Romania was annexed to that of Doge of Venice, at the close of his splendid achievements in the holy wars.

I paused to look at the horses to-day that once graced the Place de Carousel at Paris. They are restored to their ancient position, the western porch of the church of St. Mark, which they crown. Well may they be styled the steeds of victory, for they have been for centuries the prize of the victor. Augustus seized them by right of conquest, after the defeat of Antony, removed them from Alexandria, and placed them on a triumphal arch at Rome. Nero, Domitian, Trajan, and Constantine, in turn, elevated them to arches of their own, until Theodosius had them conveyed to ornament his new capital, Constantinople, whence the glorious Enrico Dandolo transplanted them, amongst the rest of his rich Byzantine spoil, to Venice. It was a curious coincidence, that when yielded up to the Austrian government, in 1815, the captain of the ship that re-conveyed them to Venice was a descendant of him who originally won them for her.

Antiquarians have not yet agreed whether these horses owe their origin to Greece or Rome; and the hypothesis of some of these learned worthies might furnish an amusing proof of the patience and research, if not of the intelligence brought to bear on a subject of little interest to any save their own indefatigable craft. Most of those who pause to contemplate the steeds, will reflect more on them as offering such a remarkable proof of the mutability of fortune, than to enquire whether they are Chian or Roman.

The three poles still stand in front of the church of St. Mark, from which formerly floated the flags of Crete, Cyprus, and the Morea, trophies of their vassalage to Venice. "How are the mighty fallen!" the Austrian eagle now fills the place of the winged lion, and this once proud and haughty republic is bowed to the dust.

I looked into Remusio this morning, and his recapitulation of the plunder taken at Constantinople dazzled my imagination.

He describes the portion appropriated by the Venetians in terms that bewilder one, so great and various were the treasures conveyed away. Vases of every form and of the most costly materials, cups of turquoise and amethyst, crowns of gold enriched with the rarest jewels, and ornaments of every kind formed of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, pearls, chrysolites, and topazes; hangings of gold and silver tapestries, and the rarest marbles, were among the trophies of conquest, exclusively of the enormous sum of money obtained. Such spoils must have encouraged a taste for splendour and luxurious habits of life, while they furnished abundant means of indulging it.

Though the days are occupied with sightseeing, an occupation which everywhere else had served to exhilarate my spirits, I feel a depression here that I cannot dispel; induced, I am persuaded, by the melancholy state of decay into which every object that meets my gaze is fast falling. In another century, little, if any trace of the once proud Venice will remain, and our descendants will be disposed to doubt the details of its grandeur transmitted to them; not having, like us, beheld, even in its decadence, enough to prove what it must have been in its pristine state.

There is something peculiarly saddening to the mind in witnessing the ravages of decay. We are never so forcibly reminded of the instability of life, as when we see ruin and desolation spreading their dreary empire over scenes once remarkable for their riches and grandeur; and we invest inanimate objects, undergoing this inevitable fate, with a large portion of that sympathy experienced for human beings exposed to it. I could no more be gay at Venice than I could smile over the deathbed of some poor creature retaining still enough of beauty to render my regret more acute.

Went over the ducal palace to-day. It more than equalled my expectation; and the grandeur of its interior contrasts well with the stern and sombre aspect of its exterior. The Giant's Stairs are magnificent; but I thought less of their beauty than of the last time Marino Faliero, whose fate is rendered so familiar to us by Byron's tragedy, descended them, deprived of his cap of state, to meet the death to which he was sentenced, — a death rendered more appalling by its being inflicted where the Doge takes the oath on entering the palace. On the spot where commenced his dignity was his life sanguinarily closed; and the recollection of the last scene, conjured up by beholding

the exact place where the tragedy was enacted, haunted me all the time I ascended the Giant's Stairs.

Strange power of association that can thus fill the mind with the memory of the past, even while viewing objects totally new to our sight, and well calculated to fix our attention on them !

The lion's mouth was the first object that arrested my attention on ascending the Giant's Stairs ; and even now, when its terrors are passed away, I could not help shuddering at the recollection it called up. Nothing more appalling can well be imagined than this system of secret denunciation, which left the life of the accused in the power of some unknown or unsuspected foe, without the possibility of guarding against his malice, or vindicating himself from his charges. May we not justly conclude, that to the existence of this abominable privilege of secret denunciation, may be traced the downfall of Venice ? for what state can long flourish when the lives and liberties of the subject are not protected by the law ; and when the people are not nurtured into patriotic feelings and love of country, by experiencing the paternal kindness that renders the land of our birth so precious ? Venice, in the days of her splendour, must have ever been an unquiet and unsafe abode, even for the most worthy of her citizens ; for not those of the purest lives could be exempt from accusations, when they could be preferred through the medium of the lion's mouth, by those whom envy or jealousy had excited into hatred, and who possessed so easy a mode of satisfying the baleful sentiment : This fearful memento of tyranny checks our regret for the ruin of Venice ; and reminds us that the Austrian rule, harsh as it is said to be, is less pernicious than the system that led to the establishment of its sway.

What treasures of art are shrined within the ducal palace ! Here glow the works of Titian, Paolo Veronese, and Tintoretto, whose admirable pencils seem to have been inspired to more than usual excellence, in decorating this stronghold of Venetian grandeur with the representations of many of the events of its history. Even allegory is made to administer to the patriotic desire of these great painters to honour Venice ; for in all of the allegorical pictures this City of the Sea stands prominently forth, either crowned by Victory, directing Justice, encouraging Peace, or surrounded by the Virtues.

Palma's Last Judgment merits, in my opinion, less commendation than is generally bestowed on it, and bears evidence



of his having much studied, if not copied, the works of Michael Angelo.

Tintoretto's Paradise is a wonderful work, whether considered for the multiplicity of figures with which it is crowded, or for the vigour and life he has thrown into them. The effect, however, is not what ought to be expected from so stupendous a design; for the eye soon becomes fatigued by the number of objects, and the attention wearied by analysing their respective merits. A great effect produced by few figures is always more gratifying to the beholder than a multitudinous composition, even though all its various portions may display a very high ability.

The hall of four doors does honour to the taste of Palladio. The doors are admirable, and the statues placed over them are worthy of the place they occupy. Rich as are the marble decorations of this hall, the gaze quickly turns from them to the magnificent picture by Titian, representing the Doge Grimani kneeling before the Virgin, one of the most perfect of the works of that great artist. The ceiling of this hall is by Vicentino, and harmonises well with the style of its architecture.

The ceilings of all the rooms in the ducal palace are exceedingly fine, but that of the hall of the Council of Ten, painted by Paolo Veronese, assisted by some of the Venetian school of less note, is matchless in point of execution, though the subjects bear no analogy to the hall for which they were designed. How many dooms have been sealed in this room, and how many survivors of the condemned have had to deplore the exercise of a power vested in a body who so often fearfully abused it!

The hall of the Pregadi still preserves the stalls of the senators; but the sight awakens little interest, when the beholder remembers that out of two hundred senators, met in this hall to consult on the dishonourable conditions proposed by an invader, seven only, and these not by open and courageous declarations, but by balloting, opposed the pusillanimous concession. Venice conquered would elicit our pity, but surrendered excites only contempt.

In the room, called the Anti-Collegio, is a *chef-d'œuvre* by Paolo Veronese, the subject, *Il Ratto di Proserpina*. It is said to have been, like most of the other pictures that were taken to Paris, exposed to the process of varnishing, which has somewhat impaired its beauty: nevertheless it is still a charming

picture, and the Proserpina looks so beautiful in the Venetian costume in which Paolo has attired her, that the anachronism is pardoned.

Always an admirer of the Venetian school of painting, my admiration has increased since I have seen its productions here. Brilliant without glare, fresh without being crude, mellow without the too dark shades of brown that time generally throws over pictures. Those of Titian, Giorgione, Veronese, and Tintoretto, delight me with their golden hues, and rich carnation tints. "The eloquent blood" seems to speak in each transparent cheek, and tingle in each delicate finger. Then how admirably are the fleshy portions relieved by the rich and varied colours of the draperies and accessories! One of these fine pictures seems to light up a room, and the eye always turns to them with pleasure.

The walls of the great council chamber present an epitome of the doings, thinkings, and feelings of Venice in her palmy days. On them are painted, in colours less fading than the glory they were meant to illustrate, the various conquests achieved by the republic. Nor are religious or political events excluded from this historical panorama, in which doges, emperors, kings, ambassadors, and vanquished foes, are introduced with the apotheosis of Venice, ever triumphant.

This mixture of history and allegory is very unsatisfactory to the beholders, although it permitted the artists a latitude that gave scope for introducing much decoration, generally considered effective. Venice, among the gods, looks down on the victory of Stefano Contarini, on the Lake Garda, or on that of the naval one achieved by Francesco Bembo, while presentations of ambassadors, receptions of emperors, and the return of conquering doges, are heterogeneously mingled.

When gazing on the portraits of the doges in the great council hall, the eye turns with a melancholy interest to the place that should have held that of Marino Faliero, and where the following inscription is inscribed on a black ground:—  
 "Hic est locus Marini Falithri, decapitati pro criminibus."  
 Byron has excited for Marino Faliero an interest and sympathy which historical facts do not justify; for a doge who could violate his oath of allegiance, and, instigated by a spirit of vengeance against a state, because it punished not with what he deemed to be a necessary severity, an insult offered to him, must have been wanting in generosity, as well as in a sense of

duty to his country, that entitle him to little respect. Had his motives for plotting to subvert the government, of which he was the head, been purely patriotic, he would have merited the pity of posterity ; but as a retaliation for a personal affront they were most unworthy.

Nevertheless, Byron has thrown a halo over Marino Faliero ; and made us forget the weak and doting old husband, in the interest with which he has invested the insulted sovereign. Hence I looked more at the place once destined for Faliero's portrait, than at all the portraits of the other doges—such is the power of genius !

How must a Venetian feel humiliated when he gazes on the decaying walls of the magnificent palaces of his once proud city, or contemplates the mementos of her glory perpetuated by artists to whom she gave birth, and on whose canvass he finds the only traces of those conquests of which the victors were once so vain !

" I stood at Venice on the Bridge of Sighs " to-day, and involuntarily repeated Byron's fine lines on the subject. To appreciate their truth and beauty one must have visited the place, for the reflections are at once so natural and profound, that all who can think, and see the spot that gave rise to them, will experience the same, although incapable of expressing them as he has done.\*

\* I stood at Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ;

A palace and a prison on each hand :

I saw from out the wave her structures rise

As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :

A thousand years their cloudy wings expand

Around me, and a dying glory smiles

O'er the far times, when many a subject land

Look'd to the winged lion's marble piles,

Where Venice sat in state, thron'd on her hundred isles !

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,

Rising with her tiara of proud towers

At airy distance, with majestic motion,

A ruler of the waters and their powers :

And such she was ;—her daughters had their dowers

From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East

Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.

In purple was she rob'd, and of her feast

Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increas'd.

Byron has created for his memory an enviable fellowship with that of Shakspeare in the minds of at least all the compatriots of both, who wander through Venice; for the attention is continually drawn from the historical recollections of the place, to the associations awakened by both these poets. One feels as if Venice could not be strange ground to us, who from infancy have learned to know its whereabouts from the immortal bard, who with, as it were, an intuitive knowledge of the place, its manners and customs, has imbued our minds with them, and rendered this City of the Sea familiar as our household names to us. I could no more pass the Rialto without thinking of Shakspeare, than I could see the Bridge of Sighs without remembering Byron.

The last mentioned place is nevertheless well calculated to excite other and gloomy recollections. How many victims have passed the Bridge of Sighs never to return, with hearts chilled with terror and dismay, by the certainty of the near approach of a violent death, or the scarcely less to be dreaded imprisonment in the damp and dreary dungeons beneath or in the burning Piombi above. The heart shudders when the imagination conjures up the misery that this gallery must have witnessed, and the very air seems pregnant with heaviness and sorrow, as if the grief which gave it its cognomen,

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,  
And silent rows the songless gondolier;  
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
And music meets not always now the ear:  
Those days are gone—but beauty still is here.  
States fall, arts fade—but nature doth not die,  
Not yet forget how Venice once was dear,  
The pleasant place of all festivity,  
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

But unto us she hath a spell beyond  
Her name in story, and her long array  
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond  
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway;  
Ours is a trophy which will not decay  
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,  
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away—  
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,  
For us repeople'd were the solitary shore.

had left behind it those sighs that burst from so many tortured hearts.

I was pressed to enter the prisons, but a description of their horrors satisfied my curiosity; and the Bridge of Sighs had rendered me anxious to bask again in the sunshine, which never appeared more delightful to the senses, than after having left that gloomy spot.

The near vicinity of the splendid palace and the fearful prisons has something in it very appalling to the feelings. This close proximity of luxury and wretchedness, pleasure and despair, is terrible. They reminded me of an occurrence witnessed in my early youth, and which I never have forgotten, so powerfully did it affect me. It was at a ball, my first ball, too, anticipated, as a young girl's first ball only can be, for weeks before: thought of the last thing before going to sleep, and the first on awaking. The *salle-de-bal* was brilliantly illuminated, and decorated with flowers; gay music resounded, and joyous faces were seen on every side. I was delighted, danced as if dancing was an enjoyment of which one could never tire; and, in short, felt all the elasticity of spirits peculiar to a girl at her first ball.

The windows of the ball-room were thrown up to admit the air, and my partner led me from the dance to one of them, when, at the moment I reached it, a shriek, such as I had never previously heard, pierced my ear, and made me shudder. On looking down I beheld a frantic woman endeavouring to cling to a pale young man strictly guarded, who held out his arms towards her, as he was conducted from the court of justice, sentence of death having been just pronounced on him, and his execution fixed for the next morning. The agonised shriek was from his mother, who had just learned his condemnation, and who vainly tried to embrace him, but was repelled by his guards.

Years, long years have passed since I heard that cry of despair, but I have never forgotten it. How my heart quailed when I ascertained that beneath the room in which I had been, with some hundred persons, joyously dancing, was the court of justice; in which a fellow-creature had been undergoing his trial for life or death, and that the fatal doom was pronounced amidst the sounds of gay music and dancing feet, which could be plainly heard beneath!

What could be more barbarous than the permitting a hall

of justice to be in such close vicinity with a ball-room? Yet this was frequently the case in the provincial towns in Ireland; and often were the mourners, rushing in agony from the court beneath, mingled with the revellers hurrying to the scene of festivity above.

This scene of "auld lang syne" was brought back to my memory to-day as I left the Bridge of Siglis; and in a moment I was transported in spirit from Venice, with its minarets, towers, and spires, and the pure blue sky above them, to the land of my birth, with its unornamented dwellings, canopied by cold grey clouds, through which only occasional openings permit one to catch glimpses of the heavens above.

We this day went over the Pallazzo Mocenigo, formerly inhabited by Byron. It has little to claim attention except as having been his residence; but this circumstance draws to it an influx of visitors, not only English but of all nations, who sojourn a few days at Venice, and fill the coffers of the person who has charge of it.

One painting in the Mocenigo deserves attention, although it is only a sketch,—I refer to the *Glory of Paradise*, by Tintoretto, which has great merit. The other pictures are less remarkable than those of the generality of palaces here.

Nowhere did the conduct of Byron offer so little to justify the enthusiasm of his admirers, or the attachment of his friends, as at Venice, during the first year or two of his sojourn here, and nowhere could less excuse be found for it. The decaying splendour which on every side surrounded him, ought to have awakened a train of reflection incompatible with the indulgence of the habits into which he fell; and though friendship would fain draw a veil over the scenes of his life at that epoch, the recollection pains and sorrows those who would gladly have only good to relate of him. A thousand stories are told of his low amours and reckless associations, while a resident at Venice; and, making allowance for the excessive exaggeration generally, if not always, attached to the evil doings of remarkable people, friendship itself cannot mitigate the reprobation he incurred here.

A recollection of this haunted me while I was in his former abode. I could not picture him to my mind's eye there as in other scenes, pale, thoughtful, and studious, pouring forth that poetry which found even more admirers than censors among its countless readers. Yet in this very dwelling he wrote some

things in no way inferior to his previous productions, witness the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*; and though all who liked him must deplore the misapplication of his genius in the other works—*Beppo*, *Mazeppa*, and *Don Juan*, written also here, their power cannot be denied, even while lamenting its misuse.

*Beppo* and *Don Juan*, particularly the latter, although universally decried, were as universally read. They bear such incontestible proofs of the degrading "change that had come over the spirit of his dream," that one cannot help wishing that the Muse had deserted him when he thus profaned her gifts.

Byron's philosophy, strange and paradoxical as the assertion may appear to be, greatly tended to his indulgence in a train of thought and writing, not only injurious to his own fame, but to the best interests of humanity. When a man ceases to acknowledge the influence of morality, and considers it allowable to boast the infringements on it which he commits, he lays open scenes of sin and crime, the revelation of which is attended with the most injurious effects on society; and the injury is ever increased in proportion to the talent displayed in the exposure. To how many sins have the *Confessions of Rousseau* led? and how may not their perusal have blunted the sense of shame in Byron?

Reprehensible as are the errors of which people are guilty, the fearless delineation of them is still more pernicious; and their careful concealment, though it may be termed hypocritical, is commendable in comparison to the exposition. Philosophy, or that which is so termed, is but too apt to lead a man into considering himself as only one of a genus, the peculiarities of which may be revealed with as little delicacy as any other subject of natural history. This system of generalising the errors of human nature, and of self-analysis and exposure, destroys the feelings of delicacy inherent in every fine nature; without rendering those who are prone to such infirmities wiser or better, or guarding those to whom they are laid bare, from the corruption they exhale. •

That false wisdom is indeed to be reprobated which renders a human being conscious of his evil qualities, without prompting him to their correction: and in this false wisdom, the bitter fruit of a withering knowledge of the world, Byron was an adept. It is known that the perusal of graphical accounts of great crimes, nay even of suicides, have led to the commission of similar acts; how great then must be the danger, when the

indulgence of vicious pleasures is described without shame, or even without acknowledgment of their turpitude.

I could not divest myself of the recollection of the orgies, more than hinted at by our *cicerone*, which had polluted the palace of Byron, and never felt so little interest about him, as while in it. He, too, never recurred to Venice without expressing a sort of horror of it, much such a one as many people experience for a place where they have suffered some severe malady. The last and only real attachment he formed, occurred also here; and it rendered his feeling of distaste to the scene of his previous vices still stronger.

How much one could wish that the first year's residence of Byron at Venice could be expunged from his life; where it will for ever remain as a dark spot, exciting the regret of all who admired his genius, or felt a friendship for himself.

I well remember Moore describing to me, on his return from his hurried visit to Italy, Byron's cordial reception of him at his Villa La Mira, on the banks of the Brenta, and his conducting him to the palace which I went over to-day, and which he wished Moore to occupy during his brief sojourn in Venice.

I remember that when Byron referred to the visit of Moore, he said it really had an intoxicating effect on him. "The sight of his face sparkling with intelligence, now lighted up by the very soul of mirth and frolic, and the next instant shaded by a momentary pensiveness," said Byron, "reminding one of a Bacchus recovering from ebriety, had a spell in it that took me back to London, and my bachelor days of enjoyment, when Moore and I used to dine with Sam Rogers; and run about at night to the *soirées à-la-mode*, he recounting his *bonnes fortunes*, and I cursing mine. And yet, delightful as such meetings are, I hardly know if they are to be desired. They throw one sadly out of one's general routine, taking one back to other scenes and occupations wholly at variance with actual pursuits and trains of thought to which it is difficult again to return for some time after.\* Moore had, and could have, but little sympathy with me who have been so long away from *his* world, which is London; and in brushing up my reminiscences of it, I lost sight of all that has lately excited any interest in my mind. In friendship, as in love, *les absents ont toujours tort*. We are so constituted, that although we may retain a lively recollection of former friends, no sooner have we formed new ties, and entered into a new mode of life, than we begin



to be so wholly engrossed by the present, as to retain for the past only that sentiment which the memory of dead friends awaken. We remember them, it is true, with a sigh, but as they no longer minister to our pleasures or our happiness, they are not thought of as are those who have a direct influence on our present lives. Moore must have lived in Italy as long as I have done, and have been domesticated with the Italians as I have been, to be able to enter into the train of thought and feeling that has preponderated in my mind since I came to this country; and as I was aware of this, I had nothing left for it but to go back to the scenes where we had both played what we then imagined to be brilliant parts in that comedy of errors continually performing in London life. A man looks, ay, and feels too, confoundedly stupid, when he enters into his usual routine after such a *sortie*. It is somewhat like looking at one's mirror in the privacy of one's chamber after having played the fool abroad. Then those around one, who have lately contributed, if not constituted, one's happiness, are conscious that the lively reminiscences of past associations, occasioned by an encounter with one who shared them, is detrimental for the time being, at least, to their influence; and feel averse that a new vein is, as it were, opened in the mine, into which they cannot penetrate. Your sex in particular experience this painful feeling. They think all recurrences to scenes of past enjoyment are like infidelities, and cannot bear that a man should dwell on the time when they were unknown to him, or exercised no influence over his destiny. I was once acquainted with a woman, who, on hearing some friend of her husband's refer to former scenes of pleasure, exclaimed, 'What, then, you could be happy before you knew me? I could not have believed it, had you not admitted the fact in my presence.' Yes, all you women are the same on this point, and if you could but have your own way, would have all your poor devils of husbands shut up in total solitude until they encountered you."

In the ante-room that divides the suites of apartments we occupy, from another suite, an Italian Jew, who speaks English, an accomplishment of which he is not a little vain, has established a long counter covered with objects of curiosity and *virtù*, very tempting to persons who have a taste for such expensive baubles. One may avoid such temptations if they

are confined to shops, but if people will thus throw them in one's way, it becomes difficult if not impossible to resist.

I have bought some beautiful specimens of the old Venetian glass, and some very curious cameos, in *alto rilievo*, formed of precious stones, laid on bloodstone, that bear evidence of a Byzantine origin. The flesh is represented by a layer of seed pearls, the eyes by diamonds, and the lips by rubies, realising the old descriptions of female beauty given by poets of their lady loves. The eyes of the Israelite twinkle with pleasure when he sees me approach his counter, as he anticipates the *monish* likely to pass from my purse into his, in exchange for some of the useless objects of *virtù* he has to vend. He offered me, to-day, a "*vonderfool pargain*," as he termed it, the inkstand of the last Doge, Manini. "Only tiink, Matame, de last Toge—'tis a real pargain."

I ventured to insinuate, that had it been the inkstand of Paololo Luca Analesto, the first instead of the last Doge, it would have had more attractions for me. "Ah, Matame, de last Toge is more interesting dan de voorst—dat is, more unfortunate, and de laties likes de unfortunate; to puy it, Matame, it is quite pargain. Poor Manini very ill used by de Emperor Napoleon, de last Toge; uever will have none oder Toges again at Venice."

It is thus that the Jew assails me each time I enter the ante-room; and as I cannot leave the hotel without doing so, his opportunities for tempting me are so frequent, that I suppose I shall yield to them at last, and become the owner of Manini's inkstand; that inkstand in which he dipped his pen to sign the capitulation of Venice after it had counted twelve centuries of sway.

The sea seems to encroach, by slow but *suro* degrees, on Venice. I remarked this to-day to our gondolier, who answered, "No, Signora, on the contrary, it is Venice that will at last sink into its arms, for the bride and bridegroom have both lost by their unnatural divorce. Ah, Signora! time was when the Adriatic was wedded by our Doge, and the nuptials were celebrated with all due pomp; but now, the wife, like many other wives, has forsaken her lord because he is in poverty. 'Tis the way of the world, Signora;" and the man smiled at his own wit, though in a sort that indicated little real gaiety.

I observe that the Venetian *cicerone* and gondoliers often refer to the past prosperity of Venice, and always in a tone that shows a knowledge of its history, and a pride of its ancient splendour not to be expected from persons of that class. There is something very touching in this sensibility, and it harmonises well with the character of the place, where so many objects remind one of past glory and present decay.

The marriage of the Doge and Adriatic are often referred to by the people as an event of which they might be proud. "Did not the Pope himself, Signora, Alexander III., pronounce the first nuptial benediction between Ziani and the sea?" said a *cicerone* to me, when he was yesterday recapitulating the olden triumphs of Venice.

This ceremony furnishes as curious an example of the superstition as of the vain glory of the Doge Ziani; and its institution offered a cheap mode to Alexander III. of rewarding the victory achieved in his cause, by the Venetians, headed by their Doge, over Otho, the son of Barbarossa, who was made prisoner on the occasion. "Yes, Signora," said the old man, "when the Doge Ziani entered Venice with no less than thirty of the enemy's ships, and Otho, the commander of the fleet, his prisoner, the Pope himself met him, attended by all the noblest in Venice, and a vast concourse of people, who rent the air with joyful acclamations. Then the Pope, after embracing the Doge, gave him a ring, saying, 'Take this ring, espouse the sea with it, so that henceforth it may be in subjection to the Venetian empire, even as a wife is to her husband, and let the marriage be solemnised annually by you and all your successors.' Surely, Signora, this was a signal honour for Venice. Ah me! those who love her, like me, are obliged to look back to the past for food to gratify our national pride, the present offering us only subject for humiliation."

Saw to-day the Palazzo Dario, on the front of which the following words are inscribed, "Genio Urbis, Joannes Darius;" an inscription that cannot be read without interest, amid the decaying splendour that surrounds it. The style of architecture of this palace is very striking, and the building is enriched with rare marbles. Nowhere have I seen palaces externally encrusted with marble, as at Venice; and the solidity and beauty of the appearance is unequalled. They give the notion that the owners had determined that the exteriors should be in harmony with the richness of the interiors, and greatly add to

the scenic effect produced by such edifices, while floating past them in a gondola. The palaces of Rome, Naples, and Genoa sink into insignificance when compared with those of Venice; and I contemplate them perhaps with increased pleasure from the facility afforded of seeing them, as I recline on the soft-cushioned seat of a gondola, moving languidly over the torpid water; instead of, as at Rome, Naples, or Genoa, in the morning *giros* round those cities, straining my neck to look at the houses, as, borne rapidly along, I in vain appealed to coachmen and *laquais*, to drive more slowly.

Saw the Barberigo palace to-day, in which Titian long resided, the honoured guest of its noble owner, and on whose walls he has left some of the most admirable of his works. His last picture is also in this palace, and he was employed in giving it the finishing touches when attacked by the plague: he expired at the advanced age of ninety-nine. The beauty of the conception, and the vigour of the execution of this picture, prove that the great artist's powers were little impaired by time; and make one regret that such a life should have been so terminated, when the strength of his constitution gave promise of his yet enjoying a more protracted existence, and adding to the treasures of art which his inimitable pencil has bequeathed to posterity.\*

The more I see of the Venetian school of painting the more do I admire it. It possesses a rich mellowness of tone, equally removed from the crude and chalky glaringness, and sombre shades, from which some of even the best of schools of painting are not exempt. The style of female beauty, too, in the Venetian school is well calculated to enhance the charms of the pictures. The golden-tinted hair, the rich carnation hues, beaming, as it were, through flesh fair and transparent as ever Nature in her happiest mood has displayed; the dark and arched brows, that shade large and lustrous eyes, and those rounded *contours* as free from the gross *embonpoint* of Rubens, as from the too shadowy forms of other artists, belong peculiarly to the Venetian school, and are very captivating.

Went over the arsenal to-day, which even in its present state vouches for the grandeur of the past. Two colossal lions in marble, trophies won by Morosini, guard the entrance; but like the lion of St. Mark, they have been tamed, and now witness the decay of the glory they were meant to illustrate.

Over the gate, which is very grand, is a statue of St. Justina,

and over that of the vestibule is an exquisite statue of the Virgin, by Sansovino. A curious place is that selected for the Virgin, to preside over an arsenal; and the feminine delicacy of the statue renders the approximation still more incongruous.

The leathern cap, said to have been worn by Attila, had less attraction for me than the helmets of those who fought with Dandolo; and the standards taken from the Turks seemed to wave mournfully over the arms of its now fallen conqueror.

In the arsenal is a cenotaph erected in honour of Angelo Emo, High Admiral of Venice, an early work of Canova, whose patriotic feelings towards the place of his birth, led him to seek every opportunity of embellishing it by his productions, often gratuitously bestowed. Emo deserved the honour rendered him, as his disinterestedness was equal to his courage; and Canova possessed a mind capable of appreciating the noble qualities of his compatriot.

The armour of Henry IV. still graces the arsenal. It was presented by him to the republic, and its plainness testifies the manly character and freedom from foppishness that peculiarly appertained to that great monarch.

A small model of the Bucentaur was shown us, which though unfinished conveys a lively impression of what that stately barge must have been, with its rich decorations and gilding.

No part of Venice offers a more striking proof of its former power and grandeur, as well as of its present decadence, than does this arsenal, where once the busy hum of thousands of artisans was heard, constructing those armaments which achieved such glory for the republic, and rendered such important services to all Italy. Under its present ruler the arsenal does not furnish employment to above 800 or 1000 men, and even these seem to have little to do.

The regret awakened in my mind for the downfall of Venice, when thus contemplating one of the objects that so fully attested her former grandeur, was much decreased when I looked on the instruments of torture used by the Inquisition, and preserved in the arsenal, and I turned with a shudder I could not conceal from the man who wished to explain to me how they were used. Well may we cease to wonder, and grieve at the mutability of Fortune, when such shocking proofs of the cruelty of man to his fellow-men are brought before us; and it is a melancholy reflection that civilization does not always make its influence felt by the speedy abolition of acts that disgrace it.

How often since I have been at Venice has my regret for its ruin been silenced by a glance at the Piombi, or the Pozzi, and a recollection of the misery endured by so many hapless mortals in those frightful prisons.

The establishment of the Inquisition at Venice, which took place in 1501, must have had a more fatal effect on the morals of the people than any other measure could have achieved; for the insecurity of life and liberty produced by it could not fail to generate all the base passions ever to be found, where terror on one side, and treachery on the other, tremble or fawn before a tyranny that acknowledges no law but its own will, and requires no better attested proofs of guilt, than the anonymous charges of a secret, malicious, or revengeful foe. The power of the Doge himself was subordinate to that of the state inquisitor, in whom was vested the right of deciding on the lives of every citizen of the Venetian state, nay, even on that of the head of it.

These state inquisitors, who were three in number, had keys to all the apartments in the ducal palace, and could at will enter even the chamber where the Doge slept, and examine all his papers; a privilege also held over every other inhabitant at Venice. They were exempt from rendering an account of their conduct not only while in office, the duration of which was a year, but after they had retired from it; and it may easily be conceived to what unjustifiable lengths they might have proceeded, conscious that no punishment could overtake them for their abuse of power.

Nor did the fact, that the power of these men was limited to a year, render their sway more supportable; for those who groaned beneath the tyranny of the state inquisitors one year, and were compelled to adopt a caution that might secure them from danger, were liable under the less cruel inquisitors of the next, to relax the watchfulness no longer so necessary; and, under the officers of the third year, by following the same unguarded, though perhaps innocent, conduct practised under the more merciful, draw on themselves the severest punishments. Laws, immutable and clearly defined laws, whatever may be their rigour, offer a far better security to a people, than can ever be found in the power vested in individuals, whose easiness of temper may encourage the infringement of right, or whose severity may lead to the too harsh punishment of the abuse of it.

Our *cicerone* conducted us to-day, *bongrè-malgrè*, to a mad-house, situated on one of those little islands that abound in the vicinity of Venice. I have seen so many of those asylums for human misery, that I felt little disposed to enter this one; but our guide seemed to have set his heart on our visit, and I yielded to his importunity. How different and inferior is the aspect of this hospital for the most appalling of all human maladies, to that of the *Maison de Santé* at Aversa, near Naples, or even to that at Avignon! Gloomy and cheerless as the diseased minds of its wretched inhabitants, it appears more calculated to produce than to cure or alleviate the maladies under which they labour. Inconceivably dreary is the position of this solitary building; the base of which is bathed by turbid waters, whose sluggish course in summer offers a melancholy image of the stagnant minds of its wretched inmates when in a quiescent state, as does its troubled waves in winter to the violence into which these poor maniacs are but too often hurried.

Dark and lowering clouds swept rapidly across the sky, as we neared this dismal building, throwing a deep shade over the water, that heightened the gloom of the scene. The patients considered to be harmless were suffered to congregate in a large hall, whence the varied tones of their voices, from the loud bursts of idiotic laughter down to the low murmurs of complaint, sounded gratingly on our ears before we entered it. The same wild and wandering glances, from eyes in which insanity and cunning shot forth their mingled gleams, met us at every side here, as at Avignon and Aversa, with similar entreaties for liberty, and protestations of perfect sanity of intellect,—protestations too emphatically made, and too energetically urged, not to convince one of the state of mind of those who uttered them.

The countenances of these people were fearful; cunning and fear seemed struggling for the mastery over madness; and it made me shudder to think of the probable process by which this abject terror had been achieved over minds under the influence of so engrossing a malady as theirs.

"I entreat you, noble lady, to interest yourself in the fate of a wretched person," said one of these poor creatures to me. "They say I am mad I look at me, hear me speak, and you will be convinced of the falsehood of the charge."

"Good! good! only hear him," said another, "pretending

to be in his senses, when we all know that he is as mad as——”

“You!” exclaimed a third.

“You see I am unmoved by all this folly and malice,” resumed the first speaker, his lips tremulous with rage, while he made the assertion.

“Beware of him, or he will spring on you,” cried a new comer, and the whole group set up a yell of laughter that was terrific to hear, while he at whom it was directed, maddened into ungovernable anger, forgot the dictates of cunning, and rushed on them frantically; but a stern menace from the keeper sent him cowering into a separate room, his countenance bearing an expression of ferocious malignity that was frightful.

One woman, among the many moving about, attracted my attention. She was tall and thin, and her face was as pale as that of a corse. She wore a loose robe of dark brown serge, confined at the waist by a piece of cord; her arms were bare, and a profusion of long thick black hair fell over her person, descending nearly to her legs. Her brows were curved over eyes lustrous and flashing with madness, and her lips were closely compressed. She appeared to be totally insensible of our presence, and paced rapidly up and down the hall, regardless of the interruptions offered by her wretched companions, who from time to time pulled her robe and long matted tresses, in the vain endeavour to attract her attention.

“She is now composing a piece of music, Signora,” said the keeper, “and will probably soon rush to her own apartment, in which there is a pianoforte, to play it. Poor Teresina was once one of the most celebrated composers, as well as performers; but she lost her senses, and was placed here by the Emperor of Austria, who ordered an excellent instrument to be provided for her use, and directed that she should be treated with all the indulgence of which her situation would admit. See, Signora, it is as I foretold; she is now retiring to her room; you and your party may follow her there if you please.”

We accepted the keeper's offer, and ere we reached the apartment of the poor Teresina, the sound of her instrument stole on our ears. She took no notice whatever of our entrance, but continued to play a piece of music, in which the solemn and mystic harmony of Beethoven was mingled with the sweet and plaintive melody of Blangini. Then came a burst of



triumphant sounds, reminding one of Rossini, quickly followed by strains like those of Mozart.

Never before did I hear such a performance; nor did I behold aught that resembled the performer. She looked like an inspired sibyl, giving forth the sounds of another world. Her whole aspect was changed; an intelligence more than mortal seemed to flash from her large dark eyes, and the instrument positively shook beneath the vigour with which she struck its chords. At intervals were heard a sorrowful wail, that brought powerfully to my recollection the *Miserere* of the Sistine chapel of Rome, and then came again the triumphant notes of the hallelujah. Yet this strange but admirable *mélange* was united by a silver thread, in the shape of a *motivo*, which was never lost sight of for more than a minute or two; and which was in itself so exquisitely touching, that it enhanced the merit of the composition. It was as if a spirit released from earth was rendering praise to the Most High, yet in moments remembering the objects below and left on earth, bewailed their absence.

All who listened to this wonderful performance felt like me, that it was unequalled by any ever previously heard, and left the chamber of the poor Teresina, with melancholy feelings.

"It was love, Signora," said the keeper, shaking his head, "that conquered her reason. *Poverina!* she now forgets every thing but her music; and often during the stormy nights of winter, when the spray of the waters is dashed against the bars of her window, and the wind howls dismally through the corridors, sounds similar to those you have just heard mingle with the blast, as if the voices of spirits were trying to drown those of the storm. The higher the wind, and the louder its howlings, the more violent is her mode of playing, as, if she was angered by the noise, and determined to conquer it. Frequently has her music awaked me in the dead of night; and I have blessed myself, and prayed for protection from Heaven, so awfully has it sounded."

Went over the church of Santa Maria Formosa to-day, situated on the little island Olivolo, the scene of a remarkable and romantic event in remote times, being the church whence a band of pirates forcibly bore off the maidens assembled there for the celebration of their nuptials, in the year 944. Rogers, in his *Italy*, describes this occurrence with the felicity which marks every subject treated by his graceful pen; and a recent

perusal of his charming poem led me to feel still more desirous to behold the spot where the incident occurred.

The nuptials of the most distinguished of the Venetians were celebrated on the fête of the Purification at this church; and a bridal procession, headed by the Doge, arrayed in all the magnificence that then characterised the Republic, floated to the island of Olivolo.

At a later period, actuated, as some writers assert, by a spirit of ostentation, or, as others more charitably maintain, by the desire of encouraging virtue, it was enacted that twelve youthful maidens of irreproachable conduct should be portioned by the Republic; and that, apparelled in the richest style, they should accompany the noble and wealthy patrician brides to this church, there to be wedded at the same time. No expense was spared to render this ceremony as brilliant and imposing as wealth could make it; and the glittering spoils won from conquered foes were employed to decorate the youthful beauties, who shone, on this occasion, with diamonds, rubies, and other jewels of inestimable price. Nor were the humble brides humiliated by wearing the simple garb appertaining to their station in life, and thus coming in contrast with the gorgeous ornaments of their more illustrious companions; as to avoid this too marked inferiority, jewels of considerable value were lent them by the State for this ceremony, and the portions bestowed on them were carried by each in a small casket.

The fame of the vast riches exhibited on those occasions tempted the cupidity of some pirates; who, concealing themselves the night previous to the fête, rushed, armed, into the church, even while the priest bestowed the nuptial benediction, and forcibly bore off the brides from their new-made husbands and friends, to the vessel that lay in wait for them.

Soon were countless boats seen rapidly floating over the lagoons in pursuit of the pirates. The lovers, maddened by anxiety and revenge, outsailing the rest, overtook the robbers, who, after a desperate resistance, were overpowered and thrown into the sea, and the brides were borne back to Venice in triumph.

This romantic event led to the institution of the Fête of Santa Maria Formosa, at which the Doge, accompanied by all the noblesse of Venice, attended; and being met at the church door by the priest and his attendants, were presented

with wine, fruit, and straw hats, in commemoration of the following circumstance connected with the cause of the fête. The boats into which the pursuers of the pirates rushed, belonged, for the most part, to the inhabitants of the island of Santa Maria Formosa; and the Doge wishing to reward the readiness with which these men not only yielded their boats but joined in the pursuit, desired them to choose a recompense: when, to his surprise, they demanded that they should have the privilege of receiving the Doge on the day of the fête instituted on the occasion.

"But should it rain——" said the Doge—"We will give you hats to cover you." "And if I should chance to be thirsty"——"We will give you wine to allay your thirst."

Many customs and usages existed at Venice in former days, originating in less agreeable events than the one just recorded; and offering proofs of no ordinary degree of coarseness of mind in those who furnished them. Among these, the Doge took part in a ludicrous ceremony which used to be enacted on the Giovedi Grasso, in La Sala del Piovego of the ducal palace. Scenery was arranged in that vast hall, representing the castles of those of the Lords of Friuli who had taken part with the Patriarch of Aquileia in his aggressions against the Venetians. The Doge and his council vigorously attacked these pasteboard castles with clubs, until scarcely a vestige of them remained, and then they retired victoriously to witness the still more absurd and barbarous exhibition that followed.

A bull and twelve large pigs were furnished annually on the Giovedi Grasso, by the Patriarch of Aquileia, to Venice. This present was exacted as a sort of ransom for the liberty of the Patriarch, when taken prisoner by the Venetian fleet, at the head of his churchmen. He was bearing away the spoil they had obtained forcible possession of at Grado, during the absence of the Venetians; who had gone to repel the attacks of Frederick Barbarossa, and who unexpectedly returned in time to recover the plunder.

The extraordinary demand of a bull and twelve pigs was made with the intention of throwing contempt and ridicule on the Patriarch, who was supposed to be represented by the bull, as was his chapter by the pigs. These animals were marched slowly through the principal streets at Venice; amid jests and boisterous laughter, and were then slaughtered in presence of

the Doge, who ordered their remains to be distributed among the people.

The house in which the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montagu resided at Venice, was pointed out to me to-day. Her celebrity was neither defined nor understood here until more recent years waisted her fame from England. The Venetians could not comprehend that her friendship with Algarotti was merely platonic, and tortured two or three letters of hers addressed to him, into proofs that it was of a more tender and culpable nature. Not having seen these epistles, I cannot judge how far they justify the Venetian scandal, which, like that of all other places, may have been built on very slight or erroneous grounds. My conviction is, that Lady Wortley Montagu's preference for Algarotti was a very innocent and natural one; springing out of the sympathy with which persons of superior minds and acquirements are drawn towards each other, and more especially at a time, and in a country, where such endowments as they possessed were not often to be met with in the classes in which both these remarkable individuals moved.

To illustrate the assertion, of on what slight or erroneous grounds scandalous reports may be based, I know an Italian gentleman who having received a note of invitation from an English lady of irreproachable morals, concluding in the usual way, "Truly yours," took it to a friend, to whom he expressed his regret and embarrassment at having unwillingly and unintentionally achieved the conquest of Lady ——'s heart. "Impossible," said the friend; "why, Lady —— is one of the most reserved and correct women in England."—"Here is, however, the proof of my assertion," replied the Italian, drawing forth a merely civil invitation to dinner, and exhibiting it with an air of triumph, "What say you now? you cannot surely doubt her hand?"

The friend could not resist laughing as he essayed to convince him that the letter was couched in the ordinary style of invitations.—"But look at this," answered the Italian, pointing to the words 'truly yours;' "what can be more tender, or less dubious? does she not assure me that she is truly mine?"—and though not more vain than the generality of mankind, his friend had much difficulty in convincing him that the prudent and reserved Lady —— had not, in thus concluding her letter, made him an avowal.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu spent the last twenty years of her existence in the north of Italy, leading the life of a philosopher rather than that of a *bel esprit*, and enjoyed the friendship of some of the most distinguished of the natives of the different places she occupied; among whom were the Doge Grimani and the Cardinal Quirini.

Few have ever suffered more severely, or more unjustly, from scandal than this gifted woman; but as "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," hers was not a mind to sink under unmerited calumny: and it may be doubted whether the last twenty years of her life would have passed away as tranquilly, if not as happily, among her natural connexions and friends in England, as it did among those friends won for her by her own merit in Italy; where, probably, she had never taken up her abode had she escaped censure at home.

Pope's conduct towards Lady Mary reflects more discredit on his memory than on hers: and not all the genius of the poet can make me pardon the littleness and venom of the man, who could libel the person, and that a woman too, on whom he had previously lavished every species of adulation. Had he been ill-treated, silence was the only mode that delicacy and self-respect should have dictated.

But here am I, after the lapse of a century, entering into a piece of gossip and forgotten scandal, with all the honest indignation which a recent injury inflicted on some female friend would excite. But I never can help regarding those whose writings have charmed me—as friends.

Went over the Academy of Fine Arts to-day. It is an admirable institution, and well worthy of imitation, offering a safe asylum for works of art, that might otherwise be scattered, if not destroyed. The collection of pictures, chiefly of the Venetian school, is vast, and among it are many *chefs-d'œuvre*.

Titian's glorious picture of the Assumption chained me to its contemplation for a long time, and delighted me by the exquisite beauty of the colouring. Tintoretto's Slave liberated by St. Mark is a wonderful production. Never have I seen such a specimen of fore-shortening before as that of the saint. The Executioners, too, are admirably painted.

But it were endless to enumerate the treasures of the academy, and no description could render them justice; though I have only now returned from viewing them, few distinct recollections are left in my mind: a compound mass of gorgeous images,

glowing with bright hues, seems to float through it, producing somewhat the same dazzling effect that a long contemplation of a bed of tulips leaves on the eye, pained by the too great brilliancy of their varied tints.

The Academy of Arts is also rich in sculpture, and the model of Theseus vanquishing the Minotaur, one of the early works of Canova, justifies the reputation he had even then acquired. Yet even at that early period he seems to have been enamoured of the antique, for this production reminds one forcibly of it. Some *bassi-rilievi* in this collection possess great merit; but one of the Virgin and Child, with other figures, is remarkably beautiful.

How much does Venice owe to one of her citizens, Cicognara, for establishing this institution, to which he devoted his time, talents, and no inconsiderable portion of his fortune. Such men deserve to be honoured, and Cicognara, as long as this building stands, will require no other monument to prove his fine taste and patriotism. Falling every day to decay, it is satisfactory to know that Venice has this stronghold for the treasures enshrined in the crumbling palaces and churches, which cannot long offer them a secure resting-place. Titian, Giorgione, Tintoretto, and a host of other Venetian painters! how would your pride and love of your Sea city be humbled, could you but arise from your long sleep to see the lofty walls for which you worked, more frail than the colours on the canvass with which you enriched them, tottering towards the ruin into which they must soon sink!

An abundance of fresh flowers is brought to our rooms every day; and when I gaze on their bright buds, and inhale their odours, standing at the window, with nought but the watery streets lined with palaces to be seen, I could almost fancy myself in a ship, and wonder how these gay but delicate nurselings of the land came here. Often do I see gondolas, laden with flowers, fruit, and vegetables, gliding past my window; and though always an admirer of these gifts of Nature, nowhere have they seemed so attractive to me as here, where the absence of gardens, or land on which to raise them, continually reminds me that these productions are exotic, and so enhances their value in my eyes.

This love of flowers seems to be very general here, for as I walk through the few narrow lanes, dignified by the names of streets, every window has its vase of flowers, the perfume of

which is as grateful to the sense, as their delicate hues are to the eyes.

I have half ruined myself with the Jew, whose tempting display of antiquities, and treasures of the *Cinque Cento* I have not been able to resist. Some pieces of Venetian glass, that look as if they had been taken out of Paul Veronese's pictures, or had served as models for the vases introduced in them, vanquished my prudence; and I have now before me some specimens that would have excited the jealousy and envy of Horace Walpole himself, erudite as he was in such matters, so fantastic yet beautiful are their forms, and so rich their colours. But how am I to get these fragile treasures to England? is a question that arises in my mind now that I have made them mine. It would have been wiser to have thought of this difficulty before I exchanged my gold for them, with the bowing Israelite in the antechamber. But how seldom is woman wise when tempted by something that pleases her fancy, from the time of our grandmother Eve down to our own. I only hope that these beautiful vases will arrive safely in England, and that I shall see them enshrined in my favourite cabinet in my boudoir in St. James's Square.

When I look back to the quiet comfort of that boudoir, after so many years' absence, and sojournings in various dwellings and places, the memory of its repose and elegance seems like a dream. Query,—Will all its luxurious appliances reconcile me to the privation of that perpetual sunshine, which now that I have basked in it for so many years, seems positively essential to me? Could we but get a tolerable climate for our England, what a country would it be! But should we, were our climate less bad, enjoy with the same gusto that petulantly English source of enjoyment, our fire-sides? There is something exhilarating in the very sound, which brings back countless sweet and dear associations to the mind.

#### HOME AND HEARTH.

Though gloomy, Albion, are thy skies,  
And o'er thy cliffs the loud wind sighs,  
And the bright sun but faintly shows,  
And rarely with warm fervour glows,  
Yet do thy children love thee well,  
And deem thou dost all lands excel;

For home,—blest shrine on earth e'er found—  
 Is firmest based on English ground.  
 So, though fair climes awhile may charm,  
 To thee we turn with hearts all warm;  
 For nowhere can we hope to see  
 The happiness we find in thee.  
 The blazing fire, the cheerful hearth,  
 The playful converse, harmless mirth,  
 That evening brings to happy home  
 Where only those most valued come;  
 The easy chair, the shaded light,  
 The book where fancy sparkles bright,  
 Or grave reflection chains the thought  
 To works by lofty genius wrought;  
 Read by the dear familiar voice  
 Of one whose taste can guide the choice  
 For grave or gay; while woman's finger  
 On the light broidery loves to linger.  
 And 'tween each pause, come comments meet,  
 Making the volume's sense complete;  
 And proving sympathy—the bond  
 That strongest knits hearts pure and fond.  
 How swiftly, sweetly, fleet away  
 Those hours, the calmest of the day,  
 When all the busy cares of life  
 Are hushed—forgotten, all the strife  
 That politics or business bring,  
 Their poison in man's cup to fling—  
 His household gods—those loved the best,  
 Surround his hearth, like halcyon's nest;  
 When it unruffled sailed the deep,  
 The rude winds hushed as if in sleep,  
 Is that blest home, where safe from storm  
 Is felt, domestic ties, thy charm.

Our *laquais-de-place* having no doubt acquainted his patrons, the shop-keepers, with our whereabouts and wherewithal, we are assailed every day, nay thrice a day, with a dazzling array of glass beads in every possible form, from nets for the hair, *négligées*, necklaces, and bracelets, to purses that look as if only suited to hold the wealth of some fairy queen, so delicate and brilliant are their meshes. Nor are the prices of these pretty trifles as reasonable as might be expected, considerable sums being demanded for them. But as the venders have to pay a high per centage to the *laquais* who permit their ingress to their employers, they doubtless seek to reimburse themselves by demanding an advanced price for the articles.

This system of feeing servants is universally adopted in Italy;



and here, even honest tradesmen, unlike the most respectable portion of those in England, have no scruples on the point. Couriers make no secret of the advantages they derive from their profession, although such advantages tend to no diminution of wages. A courier is not only exempted from paying for bed, board, or laundress, by the innkeepers, but is served with the best fare, and receives a bonus on the bills.

Notwithstanding the faultiness of this system, a system so calculated to corrupt the probity of servants, nowhere have I ever found more honest ones than in Italy. Trinkets and ornaments of value are continually left exposed in apartments open to a large establishment; and I never experienced or heard of a single instance of theft in a servant, during my residence abroad. The tempers, too, of Italian servants, contrary to our English preconceived notions of the reverse, are remarkably good, and their manners towards their employers not only profoundly respectful, but peculiarly obliging; as they evince an anxious desire to anticipate the wishes of those they serve. Their gratitude for good treatment or trivial favours conferred on them is always lively, and not only expressed by words, but is shown in their actions. Altogether, I consider Italian servants to be more zealous in the discharge of their duties, and more disposed to attach themselves to their employers, than those of any other country.

The want of attachment to the families they serve is considered to be such a reproach to Italian servants, that those sometimes affect an undue degree of it, who feel it only slightly. An amusing instance of this once occurred in our establishment. An additional servant being engaged at Pisa, on leaving that place some seven or eight months after for Florence, poor Ranieri (which was the name of the Pisan) expressed such sorrow at being left behind, and shed tears so plenteously in testimony of his grief, that we were induced to take him with us. After two or three months' sojourn at Florence, when the time approached for our proceeding to Rome for the winter, Ranieri one day, his voice inaudible from his sobs and sighs, informed the *maître-d'hôtel* that he must leave the service, and return to Pisa, as his wife was in a dying state. Ranieri was so good and attentive a servant, that every one in the establishment expressed their sympathy in his affliction, and I sent for him and told him that he might immediately depart, as we could not think of detaining him a single hour from his poor wife,

whose danger he represented as being so imminent. His tears and sobs redoubled when I spoke to him, and he exclaimed, "Ah, Signora Contessa! think of my sorrow at being compelled to leave a family in which I have experienced nothing but kindness. It is too much—my heart will break!" "But it cannot be helped, Ranieri, your poor wife's state demands your immediate presence, and though sorry to lose you, we cannot think of detaining you from her."

At this moment Mr. Walter Savage Landor entered to pay me a visit, and the kindness of heart for which he is so peculiarly distinguished having led him to betray a sympathy in the apparent grief of Ranieri, I repeated to him its cause, and he addressed a few words of comfort to the mourner. "Here, Signor Landor, is the letter which acquaints me with the dreadful state of my poor wife; read it, and judge of my regret, torn as my heart is by contending feelings, between my duty as a husband and a servant."

Mr. Landor took the letter, his eyes, as well as mine, moistened by compassion for poor Ranieri. Before, however, he had perused many lines, I observed, to my great surprise, smiles playing around his lips, notwithstanding every effort to subdue them. The contents of the epistle were nearly as follows:

"You say you cannot leave your kind masters, without a good excuse for so doing. I suspect that you prefer remaining with them than fulfilling your duties at home. If you only want an excuse, why not say that your wife is dying? They cannot then blame you for coming to me. You say the weekly bill of your laundress amounts to four pauls. Who, in the name of all the saints, ever heard of such a piece of extravagance? It is not to be borne, and therefore I desire you to return forthwith, to one who can wash your linen better, I am persuaded, than any laundress at Florence, and for less than one quarter of that sum. Ever since your departure, I have sat with my hands crossed, sad, not only on account of your absence, but from want of occupation; and all this while you have been paying four pauls for that which I could well do for one. It vexes me to think of it. I send you a letter at the same time as this, to show *Il Maestro di Casa*, or the English lord and lady, if you think fit, in order to furnish you with a satisfactory motive for leaving their service. Come as soon as you can. Four pauls, indeed! It is shocking to think of."

Poor Ranieri ! who could neither read nor write, had, through mistake, shown the wrong letter, but neither the kind-hearted reader of his letter nor I let him know his mistake : and he set out for Pisa, shedding many tears, caused in truth by being compelled to abandon a good place and indulgent masters, but which he now affected to be partly occasioned by the alleged danger of his wife.

It may be easily imagined, that Mr. Landor and I indulged in a hearty laugh, when released from the presence of poor Ranieri. To laugh while in it would have been cruel, though it was difficult to refrain from so doing. This subterfuge, suggested by his wife, however artful and cunning it may appear, was literally only had recourse to, in order to justify his leaving a family for whom he had professed, and I do believe entertained, some attachment, though in a less degree than his exaggeration of speech might have led them to imagine. Poor Ranieri ! the falsehood to which he lent himself proceeded from a delicacy of sentiment not often met with in persons of his class, and which half excused the deception into which it it had led him.

Went to the island of Murano to-day, to inspect the manufactories of glass, for which Venice was once so celebrated, and for which she still does not resign her pretensions to excellence, although rivalled, if not surpassed, by other countries. Those immense mirrors, formerly to be purchased only here, are no longer manufactured : and the commerce of glass seems to have dwindled down to small articles of female ornament ; among which, beads and artificial pearls are the most conspicuous. These are very beautiful ; the first tinted with dyes, pure and bright as those of the rainbow, and the second closely imitating the natural productions of Orient.

It is melancholy to see an art, once arrived at perfection, retrograde : and remembering the vast mirrors and prismatic hued vases and goblets of the ancient manufacture, I could not help regretting that so little remains ; as the trifling, though brilliant, ornaments shown to us, are the only portion of the trade which now flourishes. Much of the superiority of the old glass is said to be due to the sand peculiar to Venice ; though others assert that when their manufactories were in their most perfect state, the sand brought from Tyre was used in the composition.

We saw the Duomo of Murano, which is interesting, as of—

fering a curious specimen of Greek and Arabian architecture, a mixture which, if not correct, is at least very picturesque. The pavement is inlaid with ancient mosaics, and some fine columns support the nave. This church contains a good picture by Marco Vicellio, and another from the pencil of Sebastiani, of the fifteenth century. Some curious old carvings representing the Bishop St. Donatus, with a male and female figure, are worthy of examination, if it was only for the dress of the two last.

We entered the church of St. Michael, in Murano, to see the tomb of Fra Paolo. It is very simple, being merely a slab of white marble, laid on one of light gray; with the following inscription :

Ossa  
Pauli Sarpii  
Theol. Reip. Vennetiae  
Ex æde Servorum  
Huc Translata  
A. MDCCXXVIII.  
Decreto Publico.

Few men ever deserved more honours from his country, than did Paul Sarpi; for his vast and varied erudition has not only reflected a lustre on Venice, but it was most usefully and honourably employed in defending the rights and advocating the interests of his native place. The enmity he entailed on himself by his courageous defence of the republic against Paul V., could not have failed to be duly appreciated by his fellow citizens. This enmity drew on him not only the excommunication of that Pope, but exposed him to the attack of assassins; who stabbed him, and so injured his already enfeebled health, as to accelerate, if not cause, his death. Nevertheless, though admitting his great merit, I cannot surrender to him the rightful pretension of our countryman, Harvey, to the discovery of the circulation of the blood, a discovery claimed for Sarpi by his worshippers.

Among the articles peculiar to Venice, recommended to us by our courier, is the treacle, once so prized for its medicinal qualities in the cure of various diseases. The Italians still attach great value to it; and to those of them, particularly the aged, exiled from their native land, a more acceptable gift cannot be offered than a small case of it.

The wax candles of Venice, too, have a reputation not however borne out by the specimens used in our hotel, which ap-

near to me to be in no way superior to those employed in the rest of Italy.

Went to the Island of St. Lazara, to-day, to see the Armenian convent. It is a building of considerable extent, and contains not only the church, school, and apartments of the brethren, but has a printing-office, library, and cabinet of natural history. The whole establishment is kept in excellent order, and some of the books printed here were shown us, which do credit not only to the skill of the Armenians in typography, but to their judgment in the selection, as a person understanding the language assured us. These pious men educate the youth of their own country, who are said to make a rapid progress under their tuition.

The church bell having summoned them to prayers, we were permitted to enter the chapel where the service was performed according to the rites of their creed, which is simple, but imposing. Never have I previously seen so many fine male heads and faces assembled together; and the peculiar and striking character of each was so noble and dignified, as to induce a comparison in my mind between them and the men of other countries, highly advantageous to the Armenians; whose well defined features, large and well opened dark eyes, clear olivo complexions, and raven-black flowing beards, reminded me of the heads in the finest pictures of the old masters of the Venetian school. I was struck by the resemblance between several of them and the Duc de Guiche, and my companions also quickly perceived the likeness.

A portion of the church service was chaunted, and the sonorous and finely toned voices of the singers sounded admirably, mingled with the plashing of the water, plainly heard, owing to the lagoon being more agitated than usual by the wind.

The library contains an extensive collection of books and MSS., and is kept scrupulously clean, as is indeed the whole establishment. We received the most polite attention from the Armenian monks, who are well informed and intelligent men, with that natural dignity of manner that peculiarly appertains to the natives of oriental climes.

We enquired for, and conversed some time with, Father Pasquali, from whom poor Byron took lessons when at Venice, crossing the lagoon most mornings, and in all weather, to pursue his studies in the Armenian language, with this worthy man. Father Pasquali's countenance became animated when

we named Byron, of whom he spoke in terms of warm regard, praising not only the extraordinary facility with which he acquired knowledge, but the unaffected kindness of his heart and gentleness of his manners.

Here was another proof of the power possessed by Byron of exciting regard in those with whom he came in contact, a power exercised without any effort on his part.

The grammar in which Byron studied the rudiments of the Armenian language in this convent is now in my possession, presented as a parting gift at Genoa. A few lines in his writing states the circumstance of his having used the book here with Father Pasquali, and his name is written in two or three places.

Returned from viewing—Heaven only knows how many churches. My head is giddy, my limbs weary, and my eyes ache from the task. A chaotic mass of bright hues, fine forms on canvass, and as fine in marble, seem to overpower my memory, and almost dispose me to try the efficacy of the hitherto untasted luxury of a *siesta*, in order to forget the multiplicity of objects I have seen. Nothing can well be more injudicious than crowding into one day sights that ought to be beheld leisurely in several.

What fine pictures have I not passed to-day, towards the close of my *giro*, with only a cursory glance, so exhausted was I by the expenditure of so much admiration! But alas! my sojourn at Venice draws towards its close, and I can no longer, as hitherto, lounge from one sight to another, viewing each, and all, *con amore*. I paused, however, in the church of *Dei Frari*, to look on the inscription which marks the grave of Titian, and turned with sadness from its contemplation, to feast my eyes on an admirable picture by that inimitable master, representing the Virgin and a group of saints, which was still glowing with the bright tints impressed by the hand mouldering in the vault of the same church.

The Grimani palace delighted us to-day. It is rich in portraits by Titian and Paul Veronese, and has a fine collection of antiques in marble and bronze. A ceiling by Francesco Salviatti, representing the history of Cupid and Psyche, is very creditable to that artist; and a Cupid from the pencil of Guido is charming. The Institution of the Rosary, by Albert Durer, though highly esteemed, struck me as being cold, hard and formal, after having been lately so much accustomed to the

graceful contours and brilliant colours of the Venetian school. Yet this picture, if seen elsewhere, would have claimed my admiration, but contrasted with its glowing companions, it appeared like an English day compared with an Italian.

The other Grimani Palace, a splendid specimen of the skill of San Micheli, is now converted into a post-office. The dislike felt by the Venetians towards the Austrians breaks out, whenever the latter are the subject of remark, with a bitterness that proves its depth. Even when ridiculing these unwelcome guests, the contemptuousness of the epithets they bestow on them have more of hatred than jocularly, although they aim at jesting. The relative positions of the Venetians and Austrians are well calculated to excite this dislike in the breasts of the former; for cold and unpatriotic must be the hearts of those who could see with patience their native place ruled by strangers, even though ruled with gentleness. But reminded at every step, as the Venetians must be, of their past glory, the trophies of which meet their eyes on all sides, can it be wondered at, that in the excitation, as peculiar to political as to physical weakness, they loathe what they cannot vanquish.

As far as a long residence in Italy has enabled me to judge impartially, I have seen no proofs of the insolence and tyranny alleged against the Austrians, to justify the enmity entertained against them by the Italians; notwithstanding which, I can well understand and pardon these last for the indulgence of the sentiment, the absence of which would indicate a total want of the love and pride of country, which though powerless to redeem freedom, has not ceased to deplore its loss. Here, as well as at Naples, the conduct of the Austrians appears to me to be irreproachable; the steadiness and quietness of their natural habits precluding the exhibition of the air of triumph, or of conscious superiority of force, that might, with men of a more mercurial temperament, so continually goad into anger those to whom their presence is so painful. At Venice, where the Austrians are absolute masters, no instance of insolent sway on their part has ever come to my knowledge; nevertheless, the Venetians, rendered painfully susceptible by their position, discover offence where a stranger might see none: hence I do not wonder at the dislike they entertain for their rulers.

Spent some hours in the Barbarigo Palace to-day. Here Titian often dwelt whole months, painting some of the glorious pictures that still adorn the walls. It is pleasant to remember

the friendly terms on which this great artist lived with many of the most illustrious patricians among his contemporaries; and whose liberal patronage enabled him to refuse the brilliant offers of kings and pontiffs,—a fact no less honourable to him than to his noble countrymen. Here is a *Magdalen* of his, a picture full of deep pathos; a *Venus*, like all those that came from his pencil—beautiful; and a *St. Sebastian*, which must be looked on with even more interest than his other works, from having been the last. Though living to the protracted age of ninety-nine, this last picture of the great master bears no indication of diminished skill or power; and its excellence makes one regret that the closing of so valuable a life was produced, not by the ravages of Time, but by a disease which swept away hundreds at that period—for he died of the plague, in 1576.

One of the most admirable of the works of Tintoretto is also to be seen at the Barbarigo Palace. It is the celebrated *Suzannah*, and is treated in a style as uncommon as the execution is excellent; for a number of domestic animals, as well as poultry, are introduced into it, all painted with the utmost truth and vigour; and which, however they may draw attention from the principal object, prove how accurately Tintoretto had studied nature, and how inimitably he could represent it.

A youthful work of Canova forms a striking ornament in this collection. The subject is *Dædalus* and *Icarus*; and though very inferior to the productions of his maturity, bears the impress of that genius which was afterwards as universally acknowledged as admired. The truth of the often repeated story of Canova's first remarkable work having been executed in the ductile but homely material of butter, is generally vouched for at Venice. How far this incident may influence my opinion I do not pretend to say, knowing how much even such trifles may unconsciously and involuntarily bias one's judgment; but much as I admire the works of Canova, I have never stood before one of them without being reminded of it by the unusually pulpy effect of his delineations of flesh, which much more resemble butter than that which he sought to represent. This peculiarity was by many pronounced to be one of the great sculptor's excellences; and to give so hard a substance as marble this apparent softness, must have been a difficulty vanquished. Nevertheless, however erroneous my opinion may be deemed, it seemed to me that this effect was carried to a



fault in Canova's works, for in none of those of the antique have I observed marble so conspicuously laboured.

Existence is wholly different here from what I have experienced it in other parts of Italy. Or, should I not rather say, the colour it takes, and the train of thought into which the mind falls at Venice, is wholly different. Here, the absence of all noise, and the freedom from interruption by any of the nameless and countless causes of it that force themselves on one elsewhere, engenders a calmness which, though it may sometimes degenerate into a state of stagnation, like the canals over which our gondola glides, disposes one to an agreeable, if not to a philosophical, state of contemplation. One's own individual cares (and who is without them?) if not forgotten, at least are soothed by the repose that pervades the place, and the sympathy daily excited in the mind by the decaying splendours which on every side meet the gaze. One feels no longer disposed for gaiety; and the dreamy routine of gliding in a gondola over sleepy canals, to view deserted palaces opened by drowsy *custodi*, and to dwell with tranquil pleasure on works of art produced by hands long reduced to dust, seems a mode of life that "custom does not stale," though I have now been so long pursuing it.

A large supply of English newspapers arrived to-day, and I felt almost ashamed of the little interest their contents excited in my mind. The whereabouts of lords and ladies; the recapitulation of the dinners given, and the *soirées*, balls, and concerts following them, appeared so flat, stale, and unprofitable, as my eye glanced from the papers to the canal on which our gondola was moored, that I let them drop listlessly from my languid hand, half wondering that rational beings could not only so employ their time, but so proclaim the mode of employment. How wondrous wise we become, when away from the temptations we feel disposed to censure! Many a one, I dare say, has thought of London life, and its round of engagements and pleasures, as I now do; yet once back to the modern Babel, and entered into its vortex, has pursued the same course, with as much zest as those formerly wondered at for so doing. We are all influenced by the scene in which we find ourselves placed; and like the chameleon, whose body assumes the hue of whatever is near it, our minds borrow a colour from the objects that surround us. In deserted, decaying Venice, we philoso-

phise, as in prosperous and populous London we enter into the round of gaiety. Yet we believe ourselves wise!

When I behold the splendid palaces of Venice falling into ruin, I am tempted to apostrophise them in the same spirit as Lear does the corse of Cordelia, when he says—

Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,  
And thou no breath at all?

Thus I feel inclined to demand, "Why should inferior cities flourish and increase, and thou, fair Venice, crumble to decay?" But the feeling that dictates the speech, though genuine, may expose me to the charge of sentimentality, urged, and with some reason for it, too, against a certain lady; who wept when at Venice, at the thought that her future great-grandchildren would be deprived of the satisfaction of viewing it, as it would have disappeared before they should enter life. This sentimental lady was not more than three months married, and had not completed her nineteenth year; so that the interest relative to her great-grandchildren was considered somewhat premature.

Saw some beautiful tapestries to-day, at the Michieli Palace, worked from drawings by Raphael; and a collection of armour worn by the celebrated Doge Dominico Michieli, and other members of this ancient and noble family, who have furnished no less than three Doges to the State. The first was Vitale Michieli, who was Doge in the year 1094; the second, Dominico Michieli, more distinguished than Vitale, was Doge in 1117; and the third, Vitale Michieli, who met his end by violence, was Doge in 1156.

It was Dominico who commanded the powerful armament sent by Venice against the Saracen fleet in 1122, and whose galley first entered the enemy's line in the Bay of Jaffa, and bearing down upon the ship of the Saracen admiral, sank it with all its crew; an event which is said to have so dispirited the Saracens, as to have led to their final defeat. But many of the accounts given of this great naval action, by no means justify the assertion of the Saracens having been dispirited, for one historian states that the victors fought ankle deep in the blood of their adversaries; and a second asserts that the sea, for four miles round, was tinged with a sanguine dye from

their blood. This victory enabled Michieli to exact conditions from Jerusalem, most advantageous to Venice, some of which, the partition of future conquests, led the way to their achievement.

The attack on Tyre was the next undertaking of Michieli, and during it, his heroic conduct is recorded by history; and furnishes examples of a tact and judgment seldom equalled and never surpassed. The whole history of this siege is full of romantic incidents, from the superstitious rite of drawing lots from an urn, with the different names of the Syrian cities inscribed on separate papers, which occasioned Tyre to be selected for attack; to the admirable conduct of Michieli in dismasting his ships, to the suspicions evinced by the troops who were assaulting the place by land; down to the fortunate artifice, which led to the surrender of Tyre, of substituting a forged despatch to the wing of a carrier pigeon sent by the Sultan of Damascus, and which had fallen into the hands of the Venetians.

Ascalon was the next conquest of Michieli, and was soon followed by an attack on Rhodes, which he sacked and pillaged; and on Scio, which underwent the same fate. His successes over the whole of the Archipelago were followed by those in the Morea, his entire career offering a series of uninterrupted good fortune. The sense of his services and prowess entertained by Venice, is proved by the commencing line of his epitaph, "*Terror Græcorum jacet hic.*"

The two splendid granite columns still standing on the Piazzetta of St. Mark, are part of the spoil brought by Dominico Michieli from Palestine.

Vitale, the last Doge of the house of Michieli, though less illustrious than Dominico, deserved not the cruel fate that awaited him at the hands of his ungrateful countrymen. These rendering him responsible for the results of that terrible scourge, the plague, which broke out at Scio in 1171, while the Doge was in winter quarters there, and which compelled him to return to Venice with the miserable wreck of his armament, avenged the disappointment of their hopes of conquest on Vitale, by attacking his palace and putting him to death.

The acquaintance of the gondoliers and *ciceroni* of Venice with the annals of their city, and the episodes that belong to her history, surprises as well as amuses me. I fear persons in the same class of life in England would not possess an equal

extent of even superficial knowledge—yet how find persons of precisely the same class? For the hackney coachman of London bears no more analogy with the gondolier of Venice, than the smart and priggish waiter at one of the fashionable hotels in the former city, does with the garrulous *laquais-de-place*, who styles himself *cicerone* at the latter.

Referring last evening, in our gondola, to the romantic history of the celebrated Bianca Capello, of which one of our party reminded me by enquiring whether the palace of her family was still to be seen, our gondolier immediately said, “Ah! Signora, hers was indeed a strange story.” Curious to know whether he really knew the tale, I questioned him; when he gave us Malespini’s version of it very accurately, not forgetting the incident, related only by the novelist, of her having left the door of her father’s palace ajar, while she stole to an interview with her lover; and that a baker’s boy, passing the door at dawn of day, closed it, which filling her with despair at the certainty of detection, led to her flight with her lover to Florence.

Galutzi’s narrative is considered to be the most correct, and, as I read it only a few months ago, I will give its substance in an abridgment, thinking that it may amuse and interest others as much as it did me. It proves the assertion that truth is often stranger than fiction; as well as the moral, that grandeur attained by guilt cannot bestow happiness.

The whole history of Bianca Capello resembles romance more than real life, but her guilt robs her story of the interest attached to romance. Its incidents, all save the first, were accomplished by fraud, deception, and demoralisation, and owe their successful results even more to the weakness of him against whom her blandishments were practised, than to her own artifice and cupidity.

The daughter of an ancient Venetian house, nearly connected with the noble family of Grimani, Bianca became, while yet in early youth, enamoured with a young Florentine, of the name of Bonaventuri, the son of an obscure Florentine merchant, who had sent him to Venice to learn his profession. It chanced that the house of his master was near the Palazzo Capello, and from her balcony the beautiful Bianca saw, and became captivated by the handsome youth, who had previously been struck by her charms.

Through the medium of her female attendant, Bianca was

enabled to effect stolen interviews with her lover, and often left the palace of her father at night, attended by her *confidante*, to seek the dwelling of Bonaventuri. During these clandestine nocturnal visits the door of the palazzo was left ajar; but returning one morning at early dawn, Bianca found the portal closed, whether by a gust of wind or by treachery, she knew not. Fearful, however, of the consequences which she knew awaited the discovery of her guilt, she and her lover instantly fled to Florence, where they were married.

The rage and indignation of her family knew no bounds. The Council of Ten declared that the whole of the noble Venetians were insulted by Bonaventuri in this *mésalliance*, and offered a reward of ten thousand ducats for his head.

Bonaventuri, terrified by the measures taken against him, applied for protection to the Prince Francisco de' Medici, who, struck with compassion for the young man, interposed his good offices at Venice in favour of the youthful pair, where the uncle of Bonaventuri was cast in prison on an unfounded suspicion of having aided his nephew in the intrigue. The gondoliers and servants, suspected of being privy to the elopement, were severely persecuted; and the unfortunate uncle of Bonaventuri died in prison.

The beauty and adventure of Bianca Capello soon became the general topic of conversation at Florence. Prince Francisco, then on the eve of marriage with the Archduchess Jane of Austria, having extended his protection to the husband Bonaventuri, felt anxious to behold the wife; and no sooner saw, than he became enamoured of her. Bianca was not insensible to the value of her conquest; and, though pregnant, forgot her duty and affection for her husband, and yielded to the passion of her new admirer.

Though great pains were taken to conceal this intrigue, lest a knowledge of it might prevent the marriage the Prince was on the point of forming, it, nevertheless, soon became known, and reached the ears of the Grand Duke Cosimo, whose letter of remonstrance to his son on the nocturnal visits he was in the habit of paying, is said to be still among the archives of the house of Medici, and is stated to be full of prudence and paternal affection.

No sooner, however, was the Prince's marriage solemnised, than he threw off all restraint; appointed Bonaventuri inten-

dant of his palace, and assigned a splendid suite of rooms to Bianca, to whom his marked attention left no doubt of his attachment.

Bianca's insolence increased with her power over the weak mind of her lover. She appeared apparelled with the utmost splendour at all the court fêtes; and the jealousy and reproaches of the Duchess seemed only to rivet still more strongly the chain of affection that united her husband to her beautiful but unworthy rival.

The remonstrances of Cosimo to his son, though frequent and forcible, failed to wean him from the syren who had enslaved him. Nor could they have been expected by the father to have been attended with much effect, after he, in old age, had yielded to his passion for Eleonore Albizzi, and, subsequently, contracted his ill-assorted marriage with Camilla Martelli. The Duke, however, often succeeded in calming the anger of his unhappy daughter-in-law, notwithstanding that he could not remove the cause.

The Princess was a woman of a cold, proud, and stern nature, and though not destitute of beauty, was totally devoid of that grace and softness which constitute its greatest attraction. The austerity of her manners, and the gloomy melancholy of her mind, became still more marked as she witnessed the open preference of Francisco for Bianca, and his indifference, if not dislike, towards herself. While he lavished wealth on his favourite, he denied his wife the means of supporting the dignity of her station; and compelled her to seek redress at the Austrian court, for the non-payment of her dowry.

The death of the Grand Duke freed his son from all restraint, and deprived the Princess, now become Grand Duchess, of her only friend at the court. The courtiers flocked around Bianca as the source whence all favours were to be dispensed, and the Grand Duke seemed more infatuated with her than ever.

Soon after the accession of Francisco to the duchy, Bonaventuri, the husband of Bianca, was assassinated in the streets; and suspicion pointed at the Grand Duke as having set on the assassin. Bianca was left a widow, with an only child, a daughter; and her lover, now that thirteen years had elapsed since the commencement of his passion for her, treated her with even a more marked tenderness. He had often regretted that she had never presented him with a pledge of their affec-

tion. The Grand Duchess, too, had hitherto given him no son; and he dwelt so frequently and so despondingly on this subject, that to insure her influence over him, the artful Venetian at length affected to be "as ladies wish to be who love their lords."

There were no bounds to his joy when this event was announced to him; and no pains saved to anticipate every wish, and preclude every annoyance to Bianca. He watched over her safety with the tenderest care, and, when the time of her expected accouchement arrived, took his place, with some of his most favourite servitors, in the chamber of the lady; who so well enacted her part, that having detained him many hours in expectation of the event, the anxiety of his mind produced the anticipated result, extreme lassitude, which led to his seeking a short repose in an adjoining chamber.

During this brief absence, she contrived to banish from the apartment all but those entrusted with her secret, and had by a private passage a new-born male infant conveyed to her bed. The birth of a son was announced, the Duke joyfully flew to embrace the supposed mother and child; and the courtiers flocked to partake the transports of joy to which the Grand Duke gave unbridled utterance. The whole palace echoed with the rejoicings on this occasion, nor did the presence of the neglected and indignant wife restrain them. The child was named Don Antonia, in consequence of the Duke, with the superstition peculiar to that epoch, indulging the belief that he was indebted to St. Antonia for the blessing of the gift. The name of Medici was bestowed on the infant, and he was publicly acknowledged as the son of the Grand Duke.

This new crime of Bianca's led to the commission of many more. Three women of the lowest class, about to become mothers, and living each in remote quarters of the city, had been secretly engaged to yield up their children, if males. Two out of the three gave birth to daughters; but the male infant, concealed in the case of a musical instrument, was conveyed to the Pitti Palace, and was, as previously stated, presented to the Grand Duke as the offspring of Bianca Cappello.

The women employed in carrying this scheme into execution became objects of suspicion and dread to her who had laid it. Some disappeared, not without its being generally believed that their deaths were the result of the plots of Bianca. What

strengthened this belief was, that one of them, a Bolognese, who was the principal agent in this nefarious deception, having been dismissed from Florence, was fired at, in a secluded part of her route to her home; and although mortally wounded was enabled to reach Bologna, where she declared, that in her assassin and his companions she recognised some Tuscan soldiers, in the pay of Bianca Capello. Her deposition was made before the judicial authorities, and the secret of the supposititious accouchement was disclosed.

While the Grand Duke was rejoicing in the birth of his fictitious son, it pleased Providence to bless him with a true one. The Grand Duchess presented him with an heir on the 20th of May, 1577. This joyful event changed, for a brief time, the position, though not the influence, of Bianca Capello. To satisfy the new-made mother, the mistress was compelled to quit the palace, and to submit to a life of comparative retirement; but shortly after the public rejoicing had ceased, she returned, to find her lover even still more infatuated by her charms, the temporary separation having increased instead of obliterated his passion for her.

Again the Grand Duchess was on the point of presenting another scion to the House of Medici, when Vittorio Capello, the brother of Bianca, arrived at Florence, and received such public demonstrations of affection from the Duke, who took him round the city with a numerous suite, that the Duchess, deeply wounded and mortified by this exhibition of the unbounded influence of her unworthy rival, was seized by an illness, which ended fatally on the 11th of April. During her last hours she entreated the Grand Duke, in the most solemn manner, to separate from Bianca, whom she accused, and with justice, of having destroyed her happiness.

Even during the life of Bonaventuri, her husband, Bianca had extorted an oath from the Grand Duke that he would marry her in case they were ever released from the matrimonial fetters that then bound them. The fulfilment of this oath she now claimed; and he, fearful of the consequences threatened by such a union, though still as fondly attached to his wily enslaver as ever, was for a time in a state of violent perturbation and indecision. His brother Ferdinand, the Cardinal, used all his influence to prevent a marriage of which, although not yet hinted at, he foresaw a probability. But his efforts were unavailing; for the Duke, instigated by his passion, now



affected to consider himself bound by the oath he had sworn to Bianca; and, notwithstanding that the ecclesiastic whom he had consulted on this point, declared to him that its fulfilment would be a greater sin than its violation, he persisted in following the dictates of his mistress and his affection. In this determination, being encouraged by his confessor, who was bribed by Bianca, he privately married her on the 5th of June, within less than two months after the death of the Grand Duchess.

When the year of mourning had expired, the Duke sent ambassadors to the King of Spain and to the Republic of Venice, to announce his marriage. The Count Sforza de Santa Flor, attended by a brilliant suite, was the bearer of a letter from the Grand Duke to the Doge, in which it was stated that the writer had married Bianca Capello, whom he considered as a daughter of the Republic of Venice, preferring that alliance to all others, and by it wishing to be considered as a son of the Republic. In this letter, he bestowed the most exaggerated eulogiums on Bianca, and, above all, dwelt with complacency on her fecundity; a curious circumstance, considering that she had previously confessed to him the deception she had practised relative to the birth of Don Antonio, and also that his marriage with her was only then acknowledged.

The Republic, forgetful of Bianca's former adventure, received the Tuscan ambassador with every mark of distinction. Forty senators of the *corpo-di-pregadi*, followed by a vast train of gentlemen, went to meet him, and a grand *cortège* conducted him to Venice. There he was received in the palace Capello, by Grimani, the Patriarch of Aquilée, in his pontifical robes, and by all the other relatives of Bianca, who were now anxious to claim an alliance with her whom they had previously disowned.

He had an audience of the Doge, surrounded by all the nobility of Venice, and forty senators, with all the magistrates and connexions of the family of Capello. At this audience, the Republic put forth even more than its ordinary splendour, in order to do honour to the Grand Duke and his consort.

On the 16th of June, Bianca, hitherto denounced by, was unanimously proclaimed "daughter of, the Republic, in consideration of the rare and precious qualities which rendered her worthy of the high fortune and dignity conferred on her; and

in return for the honour which the Grand Duke had paid to the Republic, by the wise resolution he had adopted."

The nobility and city of Venice evinced every possible demonstration of joy at this decree of the senate. The bells of St. Mark and of the other churches were rung, guns were fired, the palace Capello, and all the palaces of the relatives of Bianca were illuminated, and the father and brother of the newly adopted daughter of St. Mark were created chevaliers, with precedence over all others of their degree, and the title *illustrissimo* was bestowed upon them.

The court of Florence, deeply sensible of these honours, rendered thanks with an extraordinary display of pomp; and when the ambassador Sforza, laden with honours and presents, returned to the Tuscan court, the bearer of the diploma of affiliation, the Grand Duke sent his natural brother, Don John de' Medici, then in his twelfth year, with a numerous suite of the most distinguished nobility of Florence, to thank the republic of Venice. Twenty-eight noble Venetians were deputed to meet him at Chiozzi, and at the town nearest to Venice forty senators waited to conduct him in solemn state to that city. He was received at the palace Capello; and the republic gave power to Vittorio Capello to entertain him with the utmost magnificence, at their expense. The senate named two ambassadors to go and put Bianca Capello in possession of all the privileges which they had decreed her.

Tiepolo and Michieli, two of the most esteemed senators, with ninety nobles, composed the *cortège*; which in pomp and costliness surpassed all prior deputations from Venice. The father of Bianca, with the patriarch of Aquilée and many others, flocked to Florence on this occasion. The Grand Duke, desirous not to be surpassed in splendour and hospitality, sent Don John de' Medici, and Don Antonio, with all the most distinguished of his nobles, courtiers, and guards, to conduct the Venetians into Florence; which they entered amid the salutes of the artillery, and were received in the Pitti Palace.

A succession of balls, fêtes, comedies, tournaments, and bull-fights, were given for their amusement. The ambassadors presented Bianca with a jewel of inestimable value, in the name of the republic; and requested that the marriage ceremony should be repeated, in order that she might be crowned with similar honour as the two other daughters of St. Mark;

one of whom was wedded to the King of Hungary, and the other to the King of Cyprus.

The 12th of October was the day selected for this imposing ceremony. On the morning of that day, the senate of Forty-Eight and the magistrates being assembled in the grand hall of the Pitti Palace, the Grand Duke was placed in a chair of state beneath the dais. Then the ambassadors of Venice led in the Grand Duchess, dressed in royal robes, and followed by the whole of the Venetian *cortége*, and placed her in a chair by the side of her husband. The diploma of adoption was then read aloud, and the ambassadors ratified all that it contained, and declared Bianca, anew, daughter of the republic. When she was crowned, they presented her with the arms of her country, and then the patriarch of Aquilée pronounced a discourse on the advantages of the union and the adoption.

This portion of the ceremony was followed by the presentation of the nuptial ring; after which the Grand Duchess, with the crown on her head, was taken in triumph to the metropolitan church, followed by the Grand Duke and an immense *cortége* of nobility, amidst a dense crowd of people assembled to view the sight.

The church was decorated with the utmost magnificence, by the most remarkable artists of Florence. A vast orchestra was erected, filled with the choicest musicians, vocal and instrumental, that Italy could furnish. A solemn mass, and *Te Deum*, at which the Pope's Nuncio assisted, concluded the ceremony; and the *cortége* returned to the Pitti Palace, amid general rejoicings.

The expenses incurred on this occasion, including the presents given to the ambassadors and relations of Bianca, are said to have amounted to three hundred thousand ducats; an unheard of extravagance in a sovereign accused of parsimony.

No sooner was Bianca established in the position at which her ambition so long pointed, than she took every measure in her power to effect a reconciliation with the Cardinal Ferdinand de' Medici, next brother to the Grand Duke, then resident at Rome, where his influence was all powerful. The liberality and expensive habits of the Cardinal had involved him in serious pecuniary embarrassments, from which the Grand Duke had hitherto refused to extricate him. Bianca accomplished, by her empire over her husband, that concession which fraternal affection had failed to effect; and the Cardinal found

himself relieved from his debts, and generously supplied with money through her interference. This conduct was followed by a correspondence of the most artful and insinuating nature on her part, which led to his visiting Florence, where he treated Bianca and her brother with a display of respectful attachment highly gratifying to them and to the Grand Duke.

Nevertheless, Bianca's dislike to the Cardinal and his brother Don Pietro de' Medici, although concealed, was not subdued; and this dislike, joined to a strong desire of retaining her empire in the Tuscan court, led to her again embarking in her former system of intrigue. She declared herself to be *enceinte*, but shortly after announced an illness, that put an end to the Duke's hopes of paternity for the moment.\* In a few months following, she once more declared herself to be *enceinte*. A letter from her brother-in-law, Don Pietro, then at Florence, to the Cardinal, at Rome, proves how narrowly he watched her during this period; and how justly his suspicions were excited, that she was now, as formerly, making arrangements for a supposititious accouchement: Both the Duke and Duchess were anxious to rid themselves of his presence; but he declared he could not leave Florence until Her Highness' accouchement had taken place. When questioned by him, she betrayed evident symptoms of confusion and alarm; and even went so far as to confess that her being *enceinte* was doubtful, and that even if she were, her accouchement would not take place for six months.

The Grand Duke was extremely offended with both his brothers, for the doubts expressed as to the truth of Bianca's position; his dislike to them became still more marked, and rendered them more suspicious of his connivance in any scheme, however unworthy, that could deprive them of every chance of inheriting his duchy in case of his decease.

Nevertheless, it appears from all the historical documents on this point, that the Grand Duke was himself the dupe of the artifice of Bianca. He wrote to Rome to invite the Cardinal to come to Florence, to be present at the accouchement; and had couriers ready to send off to the different courts to announce the event.

The Cardinal refused to be present, and the correspondence

\* This step was taken preparatory to her plan of substituting again a child, and of lulling suspicion.

of the two brothers on the subject, offers a curious specimen of ill-concealed dislike and suspicion on both sides.

Whether owing to being so narrowly watched that it became impossible, as formerly, to introduce a supposititious infant, the accouchement of the Grand Duchess, notwithstanding all the preparations made for it, never occurred; violent spasms removed all symptoms of her supposed *grossesse*, and a reconciliation took place between the Cardinal and the Grand Duke.

To render this reconciliation more cordial, the Cardinal announced his intention of passing the approaching month of September with the Grand Duke and Duchess. His reception at the Palace Poggio Cajano, a short distance from Florence, where the court passed the autumn, was marked by an excessive display of affection. Bianca, especially, exhibited toward the Cardinal all the attentions of an attached sister, and every former subject of discontent seemed forgotten.

On the 8th of October this harmony was interrupted by the Grand Duke being attacked with a fever. Two days after the Grand Duchess was seized with a similar malady. The Duke expired on the 19th, and Bianca breathed her last in thirty-five hours after.

The general, if not universal, belief entertained was, that Bianca, intending to poison the Cardinal, prepared for him a *tourte* in which a violent poison was mixed. She drew the *tourte* towards the Cardinal, pressing him to partake of it, but his Eminence, as the story is related, warned by a ring which had the property of changing colour at the approach of poison, refused to eat of the *tourte*: on which the Grand Duke, playfully reproaching his brother, for his want of courtesy in not accepting Bianca's offered dish, helped himself copiously to it.

Bianca, perceiving that the death of her husband was inevitable, partook also of the poisoned *tourte*, determined to share the danger she could not avert; and thus finished a life that had been pregnant with adventure and with crime.

The insults offered to her mortal remains, and the detestation expressed of her memory by the Cardinal, now Grand Duke, served to strengthen the belief attached to the catastrophe of her death.

Went over the Manfrini Palace to-day. It is rich in pictures, many of them admirable, and none more so than that

one noticed by Lord Byron. Of the principal figure in it, the line,

— But such a woman! love in life,

gives a good notion; for the portrait is not only beautiful, but is beaming with a character of feminine softness, mingled with animation, that is delightful. It reminded me of the verse by Charles James Fox:

When the loveliest expression to features are joined,  
By Nature's most delicate pencil designed,  
And blushes unbidden, and smiles without art,  
Speak the softness and feeling that dwell in the heart.

Hew seldom does a picture excite such admiration as this *chef-d'œuvre* of Giorgioni has done; and yet, charming as it is, there is more of the real than ideal in its character.

Two or three paintings by Giovanni Bellini are of extraordinary merit, particularly the Christ at Emmaus; and two portraits, one by Paolo Veronese, and another by Rembrandt, are remarkably fine.

In the Manfrini Palace is a portrait of Ariosto, very characteristic, having precisely the expression of countenance one loves to imagine in a poet, but which so few possess. On looking at this picture, I felt sure that it must be like. The portrait of Petrarch gave me much less satisfaction; but that of Laura, though by no means justifying her lover's extravagant eulogiums of her beauty, is the most pleasing of any I have seen.

The portrait of Caterina Cornaro, by Titian, is a fine picture, but does not equal the expectations raised by the fame of her beauty, which rendered so many artists ambitious to represent it, and led Titian to multiply his portraits of her.

The interest attached to the history of this remarkable woman made me long pause before her likeness. The niece of a Venetian noble with whom she went to an estate of his, not remote from Cyprus, Giacopo Lusignano, the illegitimate son of the sovereign of that place, having beheld her, became enamoured of her beauty, and on the death of the prince, his father, usurped the crown from the legitimate daughter of the deceased sovereign, and offered to share it with his fair enslaver.

The pomp and ceremony displayed on the occasion of Caterina's nuptials, and her adoption as a daughter by the Venetian state, remind one of the circumstances which attended the marriage of Bianca Capello, with the difference, that the conduct of Caterina Cornaro, being irreproachable, the honours heaped on her exposed not the republic to the same censure, as that justly incurred by those conferred on her fair but guilty countrywoman.

To evade the law that prohibited this union of a Venetian of noble birth with a foreigner, a law enacted to preclude the dispersion of Venetian wealth into other countries, Caterina was declared a daughter of St. Mark. She was then married by proxy in the presence of the Doge and Signory; and conducted in the Bucentaur with regal splendour to the vessel that awaited her in the port. Subsequently, escorted by several ships of war, and with a large dower, she sailed for Cyprus.

Giacopo Lusignano survived his marriage only two years, and died, leaving Catarina about to become a mother. To the unborn infant he bequeathed his kingdom, and confiding his widow and future heir to the protection of the republic of Venice, he willed that in the event of the death of his legitimate child, to his illegitimate sons, two in number, and one daughter, should descend his kingdom in line of succession.

Moncenigo, the Venetian admiral, then at Cyprus, proclaimed Caterina, Queen, and when shortly after she gave birth to a son, stood sponsor to him. The Cypriots wishing to be released from the Venetian sway, to which they considered they must ever continue to be subject as long as Caterina or her son reigned, looked on her as only the Vice-Queen of Venice. To colour the revolt they meditated, the revolted failed not to circulate reports the most injurious to the relatives and supporters of Caterina. Cornaro, her uncle, and Marco Bembo, her cousin, had, as they reported, poisoned the late king in order that she should reign alone.

This tale met a ready credence in a populace like that of all other countries ever prone to believe the worst crimes of which the *noblesse* can be accused; and furnished an excuse to them to arm, and put to death those on whom their suspicions rested. Caterina and her son they made their prisoners; but no charge, or even report, involving her in the crime attributed to her uncle and cousin, ever having been preferred against her, may

be accepted as a proof that her conduct must have been irreproachable.

The Cypriot nobles proposed to the King of Naples, to bestow the illegitimate daughter of Giacompo Lusignano on Alfonso, the illegitimate son of Ferdinand, pledging themselves that the crown should be theirs.

No sooner had Moncenigo heard what had occurred, than taking with him all the force he could muster, he returned to Cyprus, where his arrival spread such alarm that many of the rebels fled; and those who had been most active in stimulating them to revolt, affected to attribute the murder of Cornaro and Marco Bembo to a riotous act of the soldiers, caused by discontent at not receiving the full amount of their pay.

Moncenigo punished with death those against whom convincing proof of guilt was furnished, and occupying the chief places with Venetian troops, re-established Caterina in her dominions.

Her son died soon after, but she nevertheless continued to reign, supported by the power of Venice, whose Vice-Queen she was for above fifteen years; when wishing to become secured master of Cyprus, and alarmed at a report that Caterina was about to bestow her hand and share her crown with Frederick, a son of the King of Naples, they determined on deposing her, and on taking possession of the kingdom.

To effect this object, and vanquish the opposition naturally to be expected from Caterina, her brother was the agent selected by the republic to negotiate the delicate and difficult affair. The reply of Caterina to his representations of the peace and exemption from care to be enjoyed by her in her native place, surrounded by relatives and friends, in preference to the toils of state, and difficulties of governing a turbulent people, and in a foreign land, is very expressive of her reluctance to yield to his wishes, and of the love of sovereignty so seldom vanquished in those who have ever possessed it.

"To me, accustomed to the splendour of royalty, and to the grandeur of a court, the inducements you urge have little attraction; and as I feel no desire to exchange my present state for the comparatively degrading one you propose, I hope the republic of Venice will wait for my death before they take possession of my dominions."

Her brother having convinced her that Venice had not only



the will but the power to obtain for themselves that which they desired, even though she made her utmost opposition to the measure, she at length yielded, though not without many and bitter tears, and signed her abdication in the presence of her council.

The standard of St. Mark having been blessed at a solemn mass, at which she attended, she delivered it to the Venetian governor; and saw it, not without deep emotion, elevated above her own on the citadel. She sailed for Venice, where a triumphal entry on board the Bucentaur to the Piazzetta was decreed to her, and she was received with all the honours reserved for crowned heads by the Doge and Signory.

A large revenue and a beautiful residence at Asola, in the mountains of Trevisa, were assigned to her, where her little court, composed of some of the most remarkable people of her day, acquired a celebrity never accorded to that over which she had presided at Cyprus.

It must, however, be conceded that this celebrity was in a great measure due to a work, written by the justly famous Cardinal Bembo (a relative of Caterina), and called *Asolani*, one of the most popular books of the time. This work consists of a series of dialogues, the subject, love, but treated with a refinement that, considering the manners of the period when it was written, and some of the former productions of the Cardinal, indicates a respect for the mistress of *Asolani*, where the scene is laid, that disposes one to think very favourably of her. These dialogues were written on the occasion of the marriage of a young lady attached to the little court of Caterina, and when a large company was assembled at *Asolani*.

Saw the *Pisani Palace* to-day. It contains the fine picture of the family of Darius at the feet of Alexander, by Paolo Veronese, which, notwithstanding the absurdity of the costumes, the women and even Alexander himself being represented in Venetian dresses, is a charming picture, full of the golden hues and rich draperies that characterise the works of this great master.

In no palace at Venice are the ravages of decay more evident than in the *Pisani*; for the damp has seriously injured all that it could impair, and the whole house has an air of desolation that affects the spirits of all who enter it.

The *Foscari-palace*, so interesting from the recollections attached to it, is in ruins; and no one can behold its remains

without reflecting on the mutability of fortune, of which the melancholy history of this ancient and noble family furnishes so striking an illustration.

If the reign of Francesco Foscari was more than ordinarily marked by the troubles, from which few other doges were exempt, the vast acquisitions won for the republic during it, must be attributed to his wisdom and courage, which, in a period of difficulty and danger, added wealth and fame to his country. The brilliant services, and their protracted duration, he having filled the office of Doge no less than thirty-four years, gave him a claim on the gratitude of the state, to which their cruel persecution of his only surviving son, and the indignity and injustice offered to himself, proved but a base return.

Byron could have found few subjects better calculated to display the powers of his genius on, than the Two Foscari : and the mode in which he has treated it, proves not only the sensibility of his own nature, which could so well identify itself with the sufferings which he represents, but, also, with how much more success poets can depict the sorrow arising from deep and natural sources of passion, than those that spring from less uncontaminated fountains : witness his tragedy of *Marino Faliero*, in which the wounded vanity of an old man is the insufficient cause of a conspiracy against the state, and by its own chief !

The sympathy we accord to real domestic affection is healthful in its effects, and the writer who calls it into action is much assisted by the truthfulness of his subject ; while that awakened for imaginary wrongs, influencing minds imbued with vanity, excites much less interest, and offers insurmountable difficulties to the success of him who attempts to delineate characters acting in such circumstances.

Byron is borne out by history in his conception of the Two Foscari ; for though some writers, biassed, no doubt, by the desire of conciliating the powers that be, have tried to represent the retirement of Francesco Foscari from office as a voluntary measure, rendered necessary by his age and infirmities, sufficient proofs exist to satisfy posterity that he was stripped of his honours, and driven from the ducal palace only a few days before death released him from the pangs which he never ceased to suffer from the loss of his son, embittered as it was by all that could most add poignancy to his feelings.

Twice during his troubled reign did Francesco Foscari pray

to be released from the cares of state, and twice was he denied the boon; as if by compelling him to remain and pass sentence on his beloved son, it was sought to render his continuance in office a source of misery to him and his. Yet no sooner was it wished to add insult to his other wrongs, than he was forced to resign; nor was he suffered to end his few remaining days in the palace where latterly so many wretched ones had been passed. When we reflect on the desire evinced by Francesco Foscari to be elected Doge, and the opposition he encountered in attaining this high dignity, we are reminded of the inscrutable decrees of Providence; which often wills it that the fruition of our wishes should entail on us the misery, from which a disappointment might have exempted us.

The nuptials of Giacopo Foscari, then sole surviving son of the Doge, with a daughter of the noble house of Contarini, furnished the occasion of one of the most brilliant fêtes ever witnessed at Venice. Who that beheld the general rejoicing at this event, could have anticipated the tragedy by which it was to be followed?

The first charge against Giacopo was that of accepting gifts from foreign powers, and no proof being obtained of the guilt his enemies wished to establish, an avowal of it was wrung from the unhappy youth by torture inflicted in the presence of the wretched father; whose trembling lips afterwards pronounced the sentence of perpetual banishment to Napoli di Romania.

For five years, did Giacopo drag on a miserable existence in banishment, pining for his home and those who rendered it so dear to his heart, when Donato, one of the Council of Ten, was found murdered at his own door; and the circumstance of a servant of Giacopo's having been seen in Venice on the evening of the murder, pointed suspicion on the exile as the instigator of the deed ascribed to his domestic.

It was alleged that this man, having been met in a boat off Mestre, early in the morning subsequent to the assassination, on being asked what was the latest news at Venice, related the death of Donato, some hours previous to its being generally known, and this circumstance led to his being arrested as the assassin. Though repeatedly tortured in the most cruel manner that malice could devise, the unfortunate man denied all knowledge of the murderer; and uttered not a word that could justify the suspicion entertained against his master. Nevertheless, Giacopo Foscari was recalled from banishment, and

again, in the presence of his aged father, sentenced to undergo similar tortures to those inflicted on his servant; and though they failed to wring from him an avowal of having even the slightest knowledge of the crime of which he was accused, he was convicted without proof, and sentenced to the more remote banishment to Candia.

A curious proof of the superstition, as well as the cruelty of those times, is furnished in the terms in which the sentence was worded; in which it is stated, that as it clearly appears that Giacompo Foscari is guilty of the crime, the honour of the State demands his condemnation; although by means of *spells* and *enchancements* in his possession he has been enabled to support the torture without acknowledgment of his guilt, he having, when undergoing it, uttered no groans or cries, but merely murmured some indistinct ejaculations.

Arrived at Candia, the hapless victim nearly sank beneath the accumulated ills heaped on him, and for a time he lost the sense of his misery in a temporary insanity. He was then permitted to return to his dearly beloved Venice for the restoration of his health, and with returning reason was again sent to his hateful place of banishment. An irrefragable proof of the malice and gross injustice of his enemies is given by the fact, that when the innocence of Giacompo was established by the deathbed confession of Eriozzo, a Venetian noble, whose animosity to the murdered Donato had excited him to commit this deed, Giacompo was still suffered to remain in banishment, with a heart panting to return once more to that spot where he had endured such unmerited tortures.

To accomplish this object, the whole and sole idea that occupied his thoughts by day, his dreams by night, until it had become, as it were, a monomania, six years after his last banishment he addressed a letter to the Duke of Milan, praying his interference with the Venetian State to obtain for him his recall.

Giacopo was not ignorant of the law that rendered this step so dangerous, but it was his last hope of seeing Venice again; and he preferred, in the madness of his despair, encountering the worst vengeance of his foes there, than dragging out a miserable existence in Candia.

This letter, as he expected, was seized by the spies, who never ceased to watch him, and was conveyed to the Council of Ten, who instantly recalled him to Venice to undergo his trial for this new crime against its laws.

Again was the unhappy Doge compelled to preside at the persecution of his son; and although Giacopo openly avowed that he had written the letter for the sole purpose of being recalled to answer for this infringement of the Venetian laws, again was the wretched father a witness of the agony inflicted on his hapless son, in order to extort from him a denial of the act he had previously acknowledged.

Giacopo remained firm to the last, although tortured until senseless, and apparently lifeless: and once more the sentence of perpetual banishment was pronounced on him, with the additional severity, that the first year of it was to be passed in a prison.

One interview was permitted between the Doge and his son, previous to the latter being sent to banishment; and the grief of both may well be imagined on the occasion. What a heart-rending scene must that have been! Yet the noble old man endeavoured to retain some portion of the composure he was so far from feeling: and, when urged to appeal for mercy to the Council of Ten, he replied, "Go, my son, submit to the decision of your judges, and seek not to change it."

Well did he know the utter hopelessness of any appeal to them, who would have gloried in his humiliation in urging a boon they would with scorn have denied.

It is said, that the old and heart-broken man fell senseless into the arms of his attendants when removed from the prison of his son; who only lived a short time after his return to the captivity assigned to him in Candia.

But the measure of affliction dealt out to the venerable Doge was not yet quite filled; his cup of bitterness still lacked one additional drop to cause its overflow, and it was not long found wanting. The groundless hatred entertained by Loredano against the Doge, and which sought its gratification by every possible means, now led him, being appointed one of the Council of Ten, to propose that the Doge should be deposed.

But even the Council, ill-disposed as they were towards Foscari, were ashamed to adopt this course with a man who had grown grey in the service of the State; and whose advanced years and shattered health promised soon to release him from the cares of office. After repeated debates on the subject, it was at length decided that the Doge should be requested to resign—a process considered equivalent to a command.

The oath formerly extorted from Foscari, never to offer his resignation, precluded him from acceding to the proposal; but they stood on little further ceremony, for they forthwith declared his office vacant, and ordered him to quit the ducal palace within three days, under pain of having all his property confiscated.

Deprived of the insignia of state, in a manner, too, that rendered the act unnecessarily humiliating, he was told that he must retire by a private staircase. Summoning up a portion of his native dignity, the venerable old man declared he would descend only by the same stairs by which, so many years before, he had entered the palace as Doge.

Five days afterwards, Malapieri was named successor to Foscari, who hearing the bell ring which announced this event, burst a blood-vessel in the attempt to suppress his emotion, and expired in a few hours after.

I loitered on the bridge of the Rialto to-day, my thoughts full of our Shakspeare, that universal genius, who has appropriated and identified the scenes of other lands with the creations of his own wondrous brain, rendering many of the spots thus immortalised as familiar to the natives of his own clime as to those who have resided on them from infancy. Who, with an English heart, has not thought of Shylock and Antonio on the Rialto, and not felt proud of belonging to the same country as he who called these characters into action ?

This is my last evening at Venice, and the sadness experienced at leaving any place, perhaps for the last time, is greatly increased here by the knowledge that every year, nay, every month, takes away some charm from this fast decaying, but most picturesque of all cities.

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I leave thee, Venice, never more perchance  
To see thy wonders, Adriatic Queen,  
Like Venus risen from Ocean, thou hast been  
A marvel, fair creation of romance !  
Vainly thy beauties painters would inhance  
By their bright art, they equal not the scene  
Thy every aspect shows, enough t' entrance  
All who have memories of the past, I ween,  
When mighty conquerors upon thee waited,  
Bringing rich trophies from each distant shore,

And thy proud Doge the Adriatic mated,  
 Who on her wave the bridegroom's troth ring wore.  
 Ah, Venice! who could then have deemed thee fated  
 To sink in ruin—all thy glories o'er!

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**PADUA.**—Spent the greater part of the day at Arquà, in the house of Petrarch, among the Euganean hills. The drive to it from Padua is charming, passing through a fertile country, presenting at every turn the most rural and cheerful pictures. A large house, called Catio, belonging to the Duke of Modena, is the only object that breaks the rural character of the scenery.

Sheltered by a hill from the north wind, the climate is peculiarly genial; and the spot on which the poet's house stands, the brow of a gentle eminence, commands a beautiful view of the surrounding landscape, which is richly interspersed with abundance of trees and vines, through which green glades and pretty houses are seen peeping forth.

The seclusion and rustic character of the place, the simple, yet picturesque appearance of the dwelling, and the associations called up in the mind, by finding oneself beneath the roof that sheltered the laurelled head of Petrarch, invest this spot with a powerful interest. From the projecting window where he often saw the sun descend, gilding with its rosy rays the surrounding scene, I too sat, contemplating the same picture, tinged with the same bright hues; and experiencing probably similar emotions to those excited in his mind, by the calm yet delicious scene, and the pleasant sounds that enlivened it, proceeding from countless birds tuning their throats in bush and brake, and the lowing of the cows in the distance. Yes, I experienced similar feelings to Petrarch, although the power to describe them as he could have done, is denied me: yet even this sympathy with such a mind is gratifying.

If any thing could dispose one to feel less reverence towards Petrarch's dwelling, it would be the ludicrous paintings that desecrate and not decorate its walls; in some of which Laura is personified in a manner that would have greatly shocked the modesty attributed to her by her lover.

The chair in which Petrarch was found dead is still preserved; it is of oak, of a quaint form, and rudely carved. The skeleton of his favourite cat is also shown; but I turned from these

perishing memorials, to look out on the unchanged aspect of Nature, on which his eyes have doubtless often dwelt. Here, I reflected on the wisdom that led the poet to abandon the homage offered to him in the crowded haunts of men, and in the intoxicating atmosphere of courts, for the tranquil and homely dwelling in which I was seated, where his mind, free from interruption, could yield to those habits of contemplation and study in which he so much loved to indulge.

I remembered a passage in one of his letters, in which he reverts with complacency to his mode of existence at Arquà. "I think, I read, and I write; hence my life and amusements are like those enjoyed in my youth: I find that, notwithstanding I have studied so many years, I have still much to acquire. I envy no one, and know not hatred. In my early days, with the folly and presumption peculiar to inexperience, I undervalued others, and overrated myself; but now, in old age, if I despise the world, I still more depreciate myself. I think only of those I love, and desire nothing but to die with piety and honour. I dread many domestics; and would have none, if my infirmities did not compel me. In my little dwelling on the Euganean hills, I hope to pass my remaining days in quiet, thinking ever of my dead and absent friends."

In the room in which I sat was this letter written, the substance of which my memory has retained: and in it also was the calm evening of Petrarch's life brought to its close. It was here that he wrote the Treatise on Government, which among many compliments to him for whom it was meant, contained none so striking as that implied by the frankness with which he hinted at his faults. It was here, too, he was often visited by Francesco Carrara, Lord of Padua, to whom the treatise was addressed, and who loved to retire from the toils of state to philosophise with his beloved friend Petrarch.

The terms of friendship on which Petrarch lived with many of the most illustrious and remarkable men of his time, reflect even less credit on him than on those who were capable of appreciating his noble qualities. But it was not alone with the great that he maintained friendships. What can be more gratifying than to reflect on the long and uninterrupted attachment that subsisted between him and Boccaccio; so different from the temporary *liaisons*, broken by jealousies and embittered by envy, which exist between authors in our days.

It was only a short time previous to the death of Petrarch,



that the "Decameron" fell into his hands, for Boccaccio, though on terms of such cordial affection with him, forbore from mentioning this work; doubtlessly because he deemed that the licentious freedom of some portion of it might have been displeasing to his friend. How kind is the letter he sent to Boccaccio after the persual of it—the last letter he ever wrote. I thought of it as I looked round the chamber in which it was written, a chamber that was to me invested with the sacredness of a sanctuary, when I reflected on the kindly affections indulged in, and the peaceful life passed here by him who breathed his last sigh within its humble walls.

By how many poets has this last dwelling of Petrarch been visited. Alfieri recorded his pilgrimage to it by a beautiful sonnet written in the album kept in the house, of which the following is a faithful transcript:

O Cameretta, che già in te chiudesti  
 Quel grande alla cui fama è augusto il mondo,  
 Quel gentile d'amor mastro profondo  
 Per cui Laura ebbe in terra onor celesti.  
 O di pensier soavemente mesti  
 Solitario ricovero giocondo!  
 Di che lagrime amare il petto inondo  
 In veder che ora inonorato resti!  
 Prezioso diaspro, aguta, ed oro  
 Foran debito fregio e appena degno  
 Di rivestir sì nobile tesoro.  
 Ma no; tomba fregiar d'uom ch' ebbe regno \*  
 Vuolsi, e por gemme ove disdice alloro:  
 Qui basta il nome di quel Divo Ingegno.

The tomb of Petrarch stands in the churchyard at Arqua. It is of marble, simple and unpretending in form, placed on four columns, and bears the following inscription:

*Frigida Francisca tegit hic lapis ossa Petrarę  
 Suscipe, Virgo, parens, animam: sate Virgine parce;  
 Fessaque jam terris colli requiescat in arce.*

The tomb still bears the marks of the sacrilegious robbers who broke it open in 1667, to possess themselves of the bones of Petrarch, in order to sell them. Our own Byron, too, came here, and his name with that of his companion is in the album. Well do I remember his having told me of his visit to Arqua,

when he brought the lady of his love, the fair Contessa Guiccioli, to see the abode and tomb of Petrarch.

"She who knows his sonnets by heart," said Byron, "and who recites them as only an Italian mouth can pronounce the poetry of her country, was delighted with this little journey among the Euganean hills, and rendered it very delightful to me. Petrarch is the poetical idol of the women in Italy," continued he, "and no wonder, since if he serves not their cause in representing the passion of love, as so engrossing and despotic a one as it sometimes is, he at least professes that such was its empire over him."

VICENZA.—Palladio has enriched his birth-place with many specimens of his fine taste and skill; which, in despite of the absence of all other attractions, still draw many a traveller to Vicenza. Nowhere have I seen a worse inn, or streets so unclean, and crowded by a population more ill-looking. A sitting-room even in the least bad inn here is a luxury unknown; and no fewer than two beds occupy the greater portion of the chamber in which our repasts are served. Our courier, the most indefatigable of his profession in endeavours to secure the comfort of his employers, shakes his head, shrugs his shoulders, and exclaims, "*Patienza, Signora!*" after each vain effort to procure a better room, or less disgusting looking food. Luckily, roasted chickens and omelets he can always manage to prepare; but even the poultry and eggs he has been compelled to go in search of himself.

The dinner provided for us, and which the host insisted on serving, consisted of some soup, composed of macaroni floating in a tureen of warm water, powdered with cheese. A square piece of beef, compact and hard as the bee's-wax used in France for polishing floors; a lump of mutton, and a lump of pork, all served on the same dish. These were the *pièces-de-résistance*; and the *entrées* consisted of brains fried in oil, and salt fish stewed with olives. Our host seemed no less offended than surprised at our rejection of these dainties; and was only consoled by the assurance that, though not eaten, payment would be made for them.

• The palace here has been restored by Palladio, and reflects great credit on his skill and judgment. It contains some good pictures, chiefly allegorical, a style which, whether in painting or literature, I admire less than any other.

There is a fine library at Vicenza, founded by a Count Bertolo, and in honour of him called the Bertoliana. The frequency of bequests of libraries and valuable collections in every branch of science and natural history, in Italy, reflects great credit on the liberality and patriotism of the donors; who in thus enriching their native towns lay the foundation of literature and science, the humanising effects of which have so salutary an influence on the happiness of the inhabitants.

Vanity, that stimulant which excites mortals into so many praiseworthy as well as foolish actions, is often attributed to those who have bequeathed valuable collections away from their families for the public advantage; but admitting that this puerile motive may have led to such gifts, the effect is so good that surely the cause may be pardoned, for vanity never was displayed in a more laudable manner. To how many beneficial consequences have such bequests paved the way? The power of gratifying the thirst for knowledge inherent in many youthful minds, the emulation excited among those who might not otherwise have been tempted to study, the love of learning that grows with the habit of acquiring it, are all fostered by the liberality of him who places within reach of his townsmen the treasures collected during his life; and the desire of the honourable distinction of having his name identified with his gift, is a blameless vanity, forgotten in the gratitude felt for his beneficence.

The Olympic theatre at Vicenza was designed by Palladio. It is too small, notwithstanding the admirable skill in perspective evinced to counteract this defect, to admit of its producing the effect so classical a building ought to produce; nevertheless, in purity of design and elegance of execution it is not unworthy of him who planned it. It is lucky for the fame of Palladio, that the design for this theatre was given previously to the discovery of those at Pompeii and Herculaneum; for the resemblance, particularly to the latter, is so striking, that it would have exposed him to the suspicion of having copied it. I could have fancied myself in a Roman theatre of two thousand years ago, so perfectly antique is the style and decorations of this of Vicenza; and the solidity of the immoveable scenery and ornaments encouraged the illusion.

It is not a little creditable to the academy whence this theatre takes its name, that it was erected by the desire and at the expense of its members; who, imbued with the love of classic lore, wished that the scene, in which their representations of

the tragedies of the ancients were to be enacted, should resemble that of the time in which they were produced. Here were performed the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides, not by ordinary actors, but by the members of the Olympic Academy; and the strictest attention is said to have been paid to the costumes, manners, and customs of the age and country where the scene of the tragedy was laid.

Few towns have ever stood more indebted to one of her sons than has Vicenza to Palladio, who has erected buildings in it that will long claim the admiration of travellers, giving to this comparatively small place an interest and attraction rarely to be found in the proudest modern cities. But the skill and taste of this admirable architect would have failed to enrich his native town as it has done, had it not found constant employment, furnished by the wealthy and great of his townsmen. Hence arose those stately palaces that still command attention; and prove how well Palladio understood the application of his art to the erection of dwellings, in which elegance and fitness reign.

The Valmarano Palace offers one of the finest specimens of Palladio's taste and skill, and the others, built from his designs, not less in number than eighteen or twenty, if less perfect, are still very creditable to him. A house of less dimensions is shown, said to have been that which Palladio erected for himself; and the exquisite taste that distinguishes it, proves it to have been a labour of love. Our *cicerone* assured us, with all the gravity suitable to the announcement of so important a fact, that Palladio did *not* build the house for himself, though it was true he had subsequently occupied it: and told a long story of its having been erected from the design of Palladio for some person, whose name I forget, and who dying after its completion, it became the residence of its architect.

Palladio, of all modern artists, seems to me to have been the one whose mind was the most deeply imbued with the classical taste of Vitruvius; and who with a praiseworthy desire of beautifying all that he touched, made his art subservient to the decoration of buildings erected not solely as specimens of architectural skill, but as residences for private individuals. From early youth, the works of Palladio evince the fine taste that peculiarly appertained to him: of which assertion the Trissino Palace, said to have been erected before he had attained his majority, is a striking proof.

There are two palaces called Trissino at Vicenza, one of

which is the work of Scamozzi, and very creditable to him; but I confess I looked with more interest at its namesake, one of the earliest buildings of Palladio. The Palazzo del Capitano and the triumphal arch at the gate of Campus Martius were also designed by Palladio, and are striking ornaments to his native town. The churches at Vicenza are numerous, but I have only visited the cathedral and the Corona. The first contains many good pictures by Montagna, Maganza, Zelotti, and Liberi; and the second has an admirable work from the pencil of my favourite, Paolo Veronese, as well as clever pictures by Giovanni Bellini and Montagna.

I am but just returned from seeing the church of *Nostra Signora del Monte*; and though fatigued by the unusual exertion of so long a walk, and in a hot day, I cannot refrain from writing down my impressions while they are yet warm in my mind. The ascent to the church is through a portico of more than a mile in length, and built of solid stone, affording protection from rain, and the too fervid rays of an Italian sun. The views caught through the openings on the right of this portico, on ascending, are beautiful; and the clear deep blue sky that canopies them, adds to them an inexpressible charm. Nowhere have I seen any thing that so completely realised my preconceived notions of Italian scenery as this portico, and the views it commands; and so great was the pleasure they conferred, that I was insensible to the fatigue of the ascent while making it.

The church pleased me less than the portico, for the simplicity of the latter makes the rich decorations of the former appear too heavy. It is in the form of a Greek cross, and built of fine stone, has a dome in the centre, and is in the Corinthian order. A convent joins this church, from one of the windows of which I beheld a landscape that forcibly reminded me of those charming ones of Claude Lorraine; so bright, so glowing, yet so tender were the hues of the objects that composed it, bathed in the glories of the morning light.

This same light streamed in through the high windows of the church, and invested with new beauty the pictures that decorate it. Among these, the portrait of Francesco Grimani, in a religious habit, and contemplating a rainbow, and the Virgin and child in the sky, as also a large allegorical picture by Giubio Carponi, possess great merit; though they lose considerably by a comparison with a noble picture by Paolo Ve-

ronese, representing Christ seated at a table, attired in the dress of a pilgrim, and the Adoration of the Magi by Montagna, which are in the refectory of the convent.

Mass was celebrating when we entered the church, and though there were but few persons present, the scene was impressive, from the profound devotion with which they seemed inspired. No head was turned, no eye moved, to note the presence of strangers; a total abstraction from earthly objects appeared to pervade those around, who, kneeling on the pavement with hands clasped, and eyes uplifted, offered admirable studies to the painter. The light, too, falling brightly from the high windows on the kneeling figures, and shedding a sort of glory on the gilded ornaments of the altar, and the white-robed priest who officiated at it, the rays of the sun now playing over some glowing picture, and casting prismatic hues on the marble, gave to the whole scene an indescribable and touching beauty.

The early morn, when Nature wakes from repose with increased freshness, and man, too, commences another day of the brief span allowed him on earth, is a meet season for prayer and thanksgiving in all places; but here, where a blue sky and a genial sun make their influence so deliciously felt, the heart more spontaneously lifts itself in gratitude, than where opaque clouds and chilling winds prevail. A fine climate makes us enjoy existence; a bad one consoles us for its brevity.

Saw the celebrated Casino Marchesi, known as the Rotondo, to-day. It is one of Palladio's *chefs-d'œuvre*, and is admirably suited to the scenery around it. It reminded me so forcibly of the Duke of Devonshire's villa at Chiswick, of which this Casino furnished the model, that for a few minutes I was transported back from the actual present to my distant home. The bright green foliage, velvet lawns, and luxuriant plants of Chiswick were remembered vividly; and a sigh given to the recollection of the space that separates me from England.

I was forcibly struck with the contrast offered by the dirty stalls, and their as dirty occupants, and the noble buildings at Vicenza. This want of harmony is very offensive, and precludes the desire for a longer sojourn here, which otherwise would, from the beauty of the surrounding country, be very tempting.

We were strongly urged to visit the Sette Comuni, a colony said to have been formed of the ancient Cimbri and Teutonese, who settled in the mountains in these regions, when defeated

by the Romans, above two centuries ago; but I confess I do not feel sufficient interest in these descendants of the barbarian hordes who invaded Rome, to venture among their dwellings. Nor has their claim to Cimbrie and Teutonic origin escaped the doubts, or the learned disquisitions of the erudite, who on this occasion, as on most others, have left the matter in debate precisely as they found it; some asserting (and among them Maffei) the Cimbrian genealogy, while others maintain it to have been German.

I have read over the dull books, *pour et contre*, written on this subject—a subject so little interesting to any save the writers—and smiled to see with what zeal each defended his own hypothesis:

VERONA.—The very name is instinct with associations dear to every English heart, and the place seems like a second home, so blended is it with recollections awakened in early youth, by the enchanter, whose magic wand has rendered parts of Italy, never visited before, as familiar to us as household words.

Verona is precisely the place my imagination presented it to be. Its picturesque architecture, its classic ruins, and its gothic buildings give it an aspect so peculiar as to render it a most befitting scene for those dramas by which Shakspeare has immortalised it, and every balcony looks as if formed for some Juliet to lean over, proving

How silver sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,  
Like softest music to attending ears,

and every palace, like the dwelling of the loving Julia, in “The Two Gentlemen of Verona,” in which she exclaimed to her waiting-woman, Lucetta,

O! know'st thou not his looks are my soul's food?  
Pity the dearth that I have pined in,  
By longing for that food so long a time.  
Did'st thou but know the inly touch of love,  
Thou would'st as soon go kindle fire with snow,  
As seek to quench the fire of love with words.

Every street seems to prove this identity of the scenes so often perused with delight, and which no longer appear like

the creations of the brain, but as realities faithfully chronicled. Verona might well be called the city of romance; of that romance which is of every country and of every time, wedded as its narrative is for evermore with associations stamped when life was new; and the mind yielded unresistingly to the impressions traced on it by him who so well knew how to reach its inmost recesses.

Who has ever forgotten the first perusal of "Romeo and Juliet," when the heart echoed the impassioned vows of the lovers, and deeply sympathised with their sorrows? Though furrows of care and age may have marked the brow, and the bright hopes and illusions of life have long faded, the heart will still give a sigh to the memory of those days, when it could melt with pity at a tale of love; and grief for the loss of our departed youth becomes blended with the pensiveness awakened by the associations of what so greatly moved and interested us in that joyous season of existence.

All this, however weakly expressed, I felt at this place to-night, when, gazing from my window, I beheld the stately buildings rising amidst tall trees, emblazoned gates, through which gardens silvered by the moonbeams were seen, with spires and minarets, looking like carved ivory against the deep blue sky, and heard a serenade, meant probably for some modern Juliet. The scene gave rise to the following sonnet, a feeble transcript of the feelings it awakened:—

Now is the hour when music's soft tones steal,  
O'er the charmed ear, and hushed is every sound  
Of busy day, and hearts awake to feel  
The ties of love, by which they're "inly bound."  
How calm and solemn is the moon-lit street,  
With yon tall spires seen 'gainst the sapphire sky,  
And fretted domes and minarets that grect,  
From the far distance, the enchanted eye,  
As brightly tinged with the moon's silver beams,  
They rise above the dusky waving trees  
And stately palaces. More lovely seems  
The scene, than aught day shows us. Hark! the breeze  
Wafts choral voices wedded to words sweet,  
As hearts long parted breathe forth when they meet.

Few places have, I believe, undergone less change than Verona, and this circumstance adds to the interest it excites. One can imagine, that could the gentle Juliet revisit earth



again, she would have little difficulty in finding the palace of the Capuletti, nearly in the same state as when she was borne from it; and the ghost of Romeo might haunt the precincts he so loved to frequent in life, without being puzzled about their identity. It is difficult, if not impossible, at least while at Verona, to bring oneself to think that the story of these lovers is, after all, but a legend, claimed by many countries. I confess it appears to me to be more true than many of the facts recorded by "grave and reverend" historians, as connected with cities and buildings which still retain proofs of their authenticity. It is the genius of Shakspeare that has accomplished this, and every English heart will own it. I feel much less interest about seeing the celebrated amphitheatre here, than the tomb of Juliet; a confession calculated to draw on me the contemptuous pity of every antiquary in Italy.

Verona is certainly one of the most interesting cities I have seen in Italy; and its cleanliness offers a very pleasing contrast to Vicenza. The hotel is excellent, having been handsomely decorated and furnished for the congress. The unusual elegance of the arrangements surprised me, until I recollected the cause; but the good-natured host was by no means disposed to forget the honour conferred on his abode, and constantly reverted to it, by saying, "This chamber was occupied by His Majesty the Emperor of this, or the King of that; here slept the Prince so-and-so, or the Ambassador of —." Very comfortably lodged were the said illustrious personages, I must say; for even now, though the gloss of the gay hangings has somewhat faded, the rooms offer an *ensemble* seldom to be seen even in a Parisian hotel, and such as I have never previously beheld in an Italian one.

The *cuisine*, too, of this hotel, is of a very superior description; for a dinner was served to us, soon after our arrival, that would not have disparaged Lointier's, at Paris. In short, the hotel, attendants and all, render an abode of some weeks at Verona not only agreeable but tempting; and after the discomfort of our lodgings at Vicenza, bring back more vividly the recollection of home comforts.

My first visit this morning was to the vineyard in which is the sarcophagus said to have been that of Juliet, the fair and gentle maid immortalised by our own Shakspeare, and to whose memory every English heart turns with an interest with which he alone could have invested it. The vineyard is

near the Franciscan convent, and is supposed to have formerly been a cemetery. It now belongs to a person who permits the sarcophagus to be seen, in return for which favour a small gratuity is expected, if not demanded.

This coffin, if such it may be called, is composed of a coarse red stone, greatly injured by time, and resembles much more one of those large stone vessels used for feeding pigs in farm-yards, than a sarcophagus. It is large enough to have contained two bodies, provided, as the *cicerone* gravely observed, they were not very large. I confess that my enthusiasm was very much cooled by the view of this tomb; for I could not bring myself to believe that it really was the last resting-place of the maiden whose story enabled Shakspeare to give to the world a creation so full of beauty, that cold indeed must be the mind which feels not its truth, and sympathises not with the sorrows of the gentle lovers.

The doubt of the sarcophagus having really been that of Juliet, consoled me for the "base uses" to which it has been applied; for, hear it all ye who have wept over her fate as represented by our glorious bard! it bears irrefragable proofs of having served as a receptacle for washing vegetables, many fragments of which floated on the impure water at the bottom of it.

The least doubt of this coffin having been Juliet's, greatly excites the choler of its proprietor; who, believing that the exercise of English generosity depends on its authenticity, and actuated by a fear of the diminution of his receipts, should discredit be attached to it, zealously proclaims it. I felt proud when I reflected that never would the names of the lovers be mentioned without a reference to England's greatest poet, who, in immortalising them, has made his own fame and that of his country still more widely extended. Happy is he whose name is blended with that of his land, and who in distant ones has made both beloved! How many thousands have visited the supposed sarcophagus of Juliet from having seen or read Shakspeare's tragedy, who would have never thought of her if the story had not been related by him.

Few tales have ever found so many different versions as that of Romeo and Juliet, which is a proof of the interest it inspired. It is in Italy first to be traced to Massuccio, from whom Shakspeare is supposed, by some persons, to have taken it; while others imagine him to have derived it from the old drama by

Luigi da Groti, and was subsequently written by Luigi da Porto, whose treatment of the catastrophe differs from that of Massuccio, from whom he was said to have borrowed the tale. Luigi da Porto makes Juliet awake from her death-like slumber after Romeo has swallowed the poison, which gives rise to a scene of great pathos. The natural joy of her finding him near her when she awakes, and his transport at her restoration to life indulged in for a few brief moments, render the horror of the discovery of his having taken poison still more striking.

Shakspeare adopted the version of Massuccio, and made Juliet awake after Romeo had expired; the scene, as now acted, having been altered, I believe, by Cibber. Girolamo della Corte, in his History of Verona, relates the story as an historical event; and Bandello, who took it from Luigi da Porto, represents it as having occurred during the time of Bartolommeo Scaligeri. It has even been traced to a Greek romance; and two versions of it are given by old French writers, each laying the scene in France.

It is asserted that many dramas have been founded on the same subject; two in the Spanish language are known, one being by Lopez de Vega, and the other by Fernando Roxas; but the names and catastrophe are changed, and the lovers are happily united. The version of the story by Luigi da Porto is that which I prefer.

From the tomb of Juliet we proceed to those of the once proud lords of Verona, the La Scalas; one of which ancient family, Cane Grande della Scala, has left an imperishable monument to posterity in the recollection of the munificent encouragement he extended to literature and those who professed it, and, above all, in his kind treatment to Dante, the Shakspeare of Italy, as he has not unaptly been styled.

These tombs are very beautiful, being in the florid gothic style, forming spires, pinnacles, and niches, in which are statues, and adorned also by equestrian statues of those of whom they were erected in honour. Standing in a much frequented street, the solemnity of their effect is greatly impaired; nor can one loiter to contemplate them long without perpetual interruption from the passers-by, the sounds of whose voices (for the Veronese, like nearly all the rest of the Italians, speak very loudly, and use most animated gesticulation) ill accord with the sentiments excited by the view of funereal monuments.

The mode in which the hospitality of the brother Cane Grande, and Alboin Scaligeri was carried into effect, was no less distinguished by its generosity and splendour than by its delicacy toward the feelings of those to whom it was exercised. Admirably well lodged, with every attention paid to the furniture and elegance of the apartments allotted to them, each guest had a servant appointed to wait on him, and might, according to his choice, have his repasts served in his own chamber, or partake those of his princely host; where music, wit, and lively conversation lent their aid to render the banquets as delightful to the intellectual senses as the variety and delicacy of the viands served up, were to the less refined one of the appetite.

The banquet hall, as well as the chambers, were decorated with paintings and devices appropriate not only to the taste of the owners, but to the positions and avocations of the guests. Victory displayed her laurel for warriors; Hope smiled for the exiles; the groves of the Muses reminded the Poets of their art; Mercury, the patron of Artists, encouraged them; and, last of all, Paradise was shown to the Sons of the Church, whose writings were supposed to point the path to it.

Nearly the whole of the guests of the princely brothers were composed of distinguished strangers, driven from their homes by civil wars or political proscriptions, men to whom such an asylum was indeed precious: nor is there, I believe, any instance recorded, save that referred to relative to Dante, of any one of the guests having had cause to feel

Come sa di sale  
Lo pane altrui.

That Dante himself felt no ill-will towards the Scaligeri, is proved by the dedication of the third part of his poem to Cane Grande, a mark of respect the susceptible mind of the great poet would have precluded him from offering, had it ever been seriously wounded while he was their guest, for Dante was not a man to forget ill-treatment.

It is melancholy to reflect, that the brilliant court of the Scaligeri, so celebrated during the reign of Cane Grande and Alboin for its munificent hospitality to literary men, should have become, under the sway of their successors, so remarkable for the crimes by which its lords were stained. The houses

of Medici and Este were the only ones, besides the Scaglieri, in Italy, accused of fratricide; and the guilt of the Medici and Este, though asserted, was never positively proved. Cane Signorio assassinated Cane Grande the Second when on horse-back in the public street, and when on his death-bed, commanded the murder of his younger brother, long kept a prisoner by him. This crime was committed to remove him as an obstacle to the succession of the illegitimate sons of Signorio, one of whom, Antonio, shortly after procured the death of his junior brother, Bartolommeo.

It is strange that so remarkable a fragment of antiquity as the amphitheatre here, should never have been mentioned by Dante. Was it that his mind was so wholly engrossed by the stirring events of his own times, events so powerfully influencing his destiny and exciting his passions, that they left him no leisure for the calm and philosophical contemplation which leads one to the study of those great landmarks of the remote past; which, like the antediluvian remains discovered deep bedded in high mountains, appeal so forcibly to the imagination, by reminding one of by-gone generations.

The amphitheatre here loses much, in my estimation at least, by its restoration. It looks too new to impress one with a conviction of its antiquity, until an examination of the solidity of the construction removes all doubts. The ancients built, not only for themselves, but for posterity; and their buildings may always be recognised by their solidity, while ours seem as if only meant to last during our lives, and perhaps during those of our children, whose descendants will have to erect dwellings for themselves.

May not this peculiarity in the domestic buildings of our time be attributed to the increase of that selfishness which has more or less marked the rapid advance of civilisation? Engrossed by our own pursuits and pleasures, we are apt to lose sight of the interests of our successors; and conscious of our ingratitude to our forefathers, we, by a poetical justice, anticipate that which may befall us, and leave our descendants little cause for gratitude. He should be considered as being more than ordinarily exempt from egotism who, in middle age, expends in planting or building for futurity, sums of money that could render his own existence a scene of enjoyment. But the consciousness of his self-denial "must be its own exceeding great reward;" as the chances are that his son, or grandson, will

feel but little gratitude for the comforts of a solidly built house, or a well wooded estate, unless, indeed, they may possess the power, as they generally do the will, to cut down the trees, or as prodigal heirs express it, to dislodge the squirrels.

But to return to the amphitheatre : Maffei calculates that it would contain twenty-two thousand persons, a calculation that seems to me not to exaggerate its extent. When viewed from the arena it has a very fine effect. Nothing could be better calculated than the shape of these buildings for affording accommodation to a vast number of spectators ; all of whom, owing to its elliptical form, could command a perfect view, not only of the arena, but of the whole of the interior of the edifice.

Saw to-day the collection of antiquities presented by the Marquis Maffei to his native town. It is in a museum in the court of the theatre, beneath a peristyle by Palladio. A bust of him is placed over the door of the theatre, with an inscription, expressive of the sense of his merits entertained by his fellow-citizens.

San Michele has beautified Verona nearly as much as Palladio has Vicenza ; for some palaces of his that I have just seen reflect great credit on his skill and taste. The Canossa is among the finest of the Veronese palaces, and commands a charming view of the Adige. Our *cicerone* pointed out to us what otherwise might have escaped our observation, namely, a frieze, on which are a vast number of mitres, placed there by the desire of Canossa, a bishop for whom San Michele erected it ; and who, actuated by the same spirit that influenced the popes when they caused their arms to be placed not only on the palaces they built, but the antiquities they restored, wished thus to perpetuate his memory, a piece of vanity less allowable in a priest than in others.

The Ridolfi Palace boasts a very fine ceiling, painted by the most celebrated of the Veronese artists, Brusasorci, representing Charles V. and Pope Clement VII. at Bologna, when the former was crowned. The costumes of the time have been strictly followed, which renders this painting very interesting, and the portraits, too, of the Emperor and Pope, are striking.

The Bevilacqua Palace, though never finished, is exceedingly rich, and San Michele seems to have given his fancy free scope in its decorations. The collection of antique statues and busts, for which it was so long celebrated, are dispersed : the

greater number, and many of them master-pieces of art, have been transferred to Munich.

The Giusti Palace is converted into a barrack for the Austrian soldiers; and in its gallery, on the walls of which once glowed some of the finest pictures in Italy, may now be seen the rude cyphers, and still more rude sketches in charcoal of the soldiers; and on its floor, where walked dainty dames and admiring connoisseurs, now pace the rough-shod Austrians and their help-mates. How would the once proud owners start with surprise and indignation, could they behold the change in their princely dwellings! but among the tortures menaced to be endured in another world, that of knowing what passes in this is not included, and which, in some cases, might not be the least bitter.

I have been again making a tour of palaces to-day; and was much pleased with the Guasta Verza by San Michele. The Gran Guardia Palace is of vast dimensions, and is by some asserted to have been erected by San Michele, while others maintain it to have been built by one of his relatives; with which opinion I am disposed to coincide, for though an imposing pile of building, it wants the perfect proportion and fitness which characterises his style, and of which the Porta del Palio is a very happy specimen.

The cathedral, which we saw to-day, is more curious than beautiful; over its door are allegorical effigies of three queens who assisted its foundation, the mother, wife, and daughter of Charlemagne, who are represented as Faith, Hope, and Charity. In front of the entrance are two figures standing on gothic pilasters, covered with a most heterogeneous number of grotesque ornaments. These personages have twisted mustachios, wear armour, and carry drawn swords; which formidable appendages give them a very grim and fierce appearance.

We looked with interest at the tomb of the Archdeacon Pacifico, who wrote the first commentary on the Bible; a fact noted in the epitaph inscribed on his monument, with the less meritorious one of his invention of a clock to strike in the night, as also of his having had a handsome face.

There are some other monuments in the cathedral, and among them that of Pope Lucius III., who, expelled from Rome, died at Verona; but an antique tomb, placed in the chapel of the Madonna del Popolo, is the most curious. It was erected to his wife, by a certain Julius Apollonius, but after-

wards received the remains of St. Theodore, Bishop of Veróna, which entitles it to its present *emplacement*. How the pious executors of the saint could reconcile themselves to the profanation of placing his sanctified body where that of a pagan had reposed, seems more difficult to be accounted for, than that they should have taken possession of the property of the dead ; but the Catholic clergy here, like the rest of their brethren in Italy, have never been fastidious about appropriating the works of antiquity, and converting them to their own uses.

The monument erected by Verona, to Francesco Bianchi, is honourable to the town as well as to him. He was a universal genius, but unlike the generality of those to whom such various powers of mind are attributed, he was nearly as remarkable for his freedom from pretensions and for his amiability, as for the acquirements that rendered him so distinguished.

The church of St. Zeno is a stately pile, but very sombre in the interior. It contains some good pictures by Montegna, and a statue in red marble of the patron of the church, more resembling a half intoxicated satyr than a saint. A tomb was shown to us as that of King Pepin, the son of Charlemagne, but this story, notwithstanding that it is supported by an inscription, is said to be wholly unfounded.

Though nearly tired of inspecting churches, and their multiplicity here rendering their examination a labour, not of love, I could not leave unseen that of St. Helena ; in which Dante maintained a thesis in presence of a numerous audience, and on a subject wholly apart from those supposed to engross his thoughts, namely, on the two elements land and water.\* I pictured to myself the severe but intellectual countenance of *Il padre Alighieri*, as surrounded by the learned Veronese of his day, he proved to them that he could do other things as well as write fine poetry.

The inscription on the monument of Leonardo Montagna, a Veronese, in this church, struck me as being peculiarly touching—

Naufagus hinc fugio ; Christum sequor : Is mihi solus  
Sit dux, sitque comes, sitque perenne bonum.

The church of St. Anastasia, erected in the time of the Sea—

\* This thesis was printed at Venice in 1518, and entitled, “ *De Duobus Elementis Terræ et Aquæ.*”



ligers, bears evidence of the magnificence that marked that epoch; and contains a very fine monument of Fregose, a general in the Venetian service, raised by his son, and the work of Cattaneo. ●

Until I visited Verona, I was not fully aware of the merit of the school of painting to which it gives its name. Many of the pictures are excellent, and would not lose by a comparison with those by more celebrated masters.

Our *cicerone* would insist on conducting us to the Santa Maria della Scala, built in consequence of a vow by Cane I., and he evinced such anxiety that we should visit it, that there was no refusing his entreaties, as he urged two inducements; first, that in an ancient fresco we should see portraits of Alberto and Martino della Scala; and, secondly, that we should behold the tomb of Maffei, whose works have afforded me too much instruction and pleasure, not to make me desirous of viewing his last earthly resting-place.

Maffei deserved well of Verona, for to a patriotic love of it, which led him to invest it with all the interest which an historian, who writes *con amore*, can bestow, he brought to the task an erudition in antiquarian lore, and a poetical mind, the happy union of which enabled him admirably to illustrate his subject.

The name of Maffei is well known in the history of literature. As early as in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it was distinguished by the writings of Vigio Maffei, the Cardinal Bernardin, Raphael, and Pietro; but it was reserved for Francis Scipio, marquis of that name, and whose tomb I this day visited, to render it still more honourably known. There is something peculiarly interesting in the life of this nobleman, whose first display of talent was evinced in maintaining a thesis on love, when, as should ever be the case, women were the umpires. Not less brave than courteous, Maffei distinguished himself by great valour at the battle of Dönawert; after which, he wrote a clever essay on duelling. Subsequently he gave to the world his tragedy of "Merope," and his comedy entitled "Ceremonia;" the fine tact and purity of language of which so justly entitled them to general admiration. Though he travelled into France, England, and Germany, receiving in all these countries the courtesy due to his merit, he preferred his native town to all other places; and ceased not until his death to enrich it by his gifts, and to do honour

to it by his writings. He presented to Verona his collection of antiquities; which now bears his name; and never are the curious and interesting objects this museum contains shown to strangers, without the donor's name being pronounced with affectionate reverence.

Saw the libraries of Verona and the chapter to-day. The first, being of recent date, has nothing either rare or curious to recommend it, but the second is rich in valuable books and manuscripts. This library contains no less than fifteen hundred manuscripts in Greek and Latin; some of them of as ancient a date as the fourth and fifth centuries, awaiting the patient researches of a scholar, like Petrarch, who here found the letters of Cicero to his friends; or of a second Niebuhr, who discovered here the Commentaries on the Institutes of Gaius, since published in Prussia.

One cannot look on even the exterior of these manuscripts without a feeling of reverence; or without anticipating the advantage to literature which is yet to be derived from a strict examination of them.

Were I to enumerate all the churches, and the pictures contained in them, which I have seen here, the catalogue would be endless; I will, therefore, only notice the Pellegrini Chapel, which reflects great credit on San Michele, being a beautiful specimen of his taste and skill.

DESENSANO.—The route from Verona to this place is very pleasant, particularly that portion of it which is parallel with the Lago di Garda, the ancient Benacus; whose beauty justifies the praise bestowed on it by Virgil, and the selection of its promontory, Sirmio, by Catullus for his residence. The country is richly cultivated, and presents gentle hills crowned by churches and villages: while to the north, the Alps rise majestically, forming a back ground to the picture.

The fortress Peschieri has an imposing effect, and seemed well garrisoned, if I may judge by the number of soldiers, not only on duty as sentinels, but loitering about. From Peschieri the promontories of Sirmio and Minerbo look exceedingly well, and tempt one to a nearer approach: but alas! I have loitered so long at Venice and Verona, that I cannot explore the site of the dwelling of Catullus, which he has immortalised by his descriptions, and which all travellers unite in representing as one of the spots most favoured by nature in Italy.

The Lago di Garda is a miniature sea, green and transparent as the waters of Lake Leman; and even now, as I gaze on it from the window of the inn whose walls it bathes, and when not a breath of wind agitates its glassy surface, I can imagine the realisation of our host's assertion, that when a sudden squall occurs, it is lashed into fury, and the tranquil water rises into huge waves, that rush towards the shore with an impetuosity and tumult quite astounding.

Nothing can be more agreeable than the position of this inn, and the accommodation and *cuisine* are very tolerable; so that one might remain long enough to explore the beauties of the environs, and they are many, without being either ill-lodged or half-starved; annoyances too frequently encountered where fine scenery or interesting objects tempt one to sojourn.

The river Mincio (fed by the Lago di Garda) partakes of its pellucid qualities, for it is as clear and sparkling as crystal, and rolls on as swiftly as does time to the happy, passing rapidly along its pleasant banks, with a murmuring sound soothing as music to the ear. Virgil has not overpraised the Mincio and its shores; and even now this portion of Italy is among the most attractive spots that court the traveller to tarry. No wonder, then, that it inspired so many poets—for not less than seven have sung its beauties.

I confess that I feel none of the enthusiasm experienced by many for the memory of Catullus, the merit of whose verses, tuneful though they be, cannot redeem the gross sensuality for ever pervading them. Nor can I forget that he was content to pass away his life in a state of supine self-indulgence, dependent on the generosity of a patron, not always commensurate with his necessities or expectations; and against whose want of liberality the poet more than hints when he refers to his own poverty.

Times are changed, and happily too, for poets; no longer do they need any patron but the public, that most generous and impartial of all, who never refuses to encourage merit, and to reward genius; and no more can they with impunity outrage decency, and corrupt morals, by indulging in a licentiousness that no genius can redeem.

It is strange, that while the public press exercises so strict and salutary a censorship over the works of modern authors, and that good taste and good morals preclude aught approaching to indecency from being published, boys at school are taught

to read those Latin poets, in whose works abound passages calculated to impress a *knowledge* of vicious pleasures, if not to give a taste for them; while the juvenile mind is in its most ductile state, ere reason has sufficiently ripened to check the evil, and when such impressions are most likely to be indelible. Cannot a knowledge of Latin be attained without the minds of our English youth being polluted by a perusal of the licentious Latin poets? is a question worthy the attention of those who undertake the education of boys, and one which ought to be suggested by parents.

MILAN.—Although prepared to see a fine city, Milan has surpassed my expectations. It is indeed a beautiful town, with its stately palaces, public buildings, and clean streets; yet, strange to say, there is not a single good inn to be found in it. The one in which our courier had engaged apartments for us looked so untempting, that incredulous of his assertion that no better could be had at Milan, we made a circuit of nearly all the hotels before we could find rooms at all comparable with those generally to be met with in every large town; and even the ones we now occupy, though spacious, are very deficient in the furniture suitable to a first-rate inn.

If civility and attention can atone for ill-furnished rooms, and a *médiocre cuisine*, we may be satisfied; and on this consideration I forbear naming the hotel where we have taken up our abode, trusting that our good advice may induce our host to render his house more comfortable in future.

I could not resist hurrying off to see the Duomo, while the servants were unpacking imperials and chaise seats, and the courier was endeavouring to aid the cook in preparing a dinner for us. Never did I behold so beautiful an edifice; and so white and fresh does it appear, that one might imagine it was only lately built. Its snowy pinnacles, with their delicate tracery, and the multitude of statues equally white, with which it is decorated, rising towards the bright blue sky, look like some exquisite piece of sculpture executed in molten silver, and delighted me.

The taste of the Duomo has been much criticised by connoisseurs; who assert, and with reason, that as a purely gothic church, it is very defective, wanting the solemnity and grandeur which generally is, and ought to be, a characteristic of such buildings.

Nevertheless, I confess that the most faultless specimen of the gothic never occasioned me so lively a pleasure as did my first glance at the Duomo; although the sentiment, if analysed, would have been found not to be the sort of one experienced on beholding a fine gothic cathedral, for there was nothing of contemplative gravity in it. The Duomo gives me the notion of a temple erected by some enamoured monarch for the solemnisation of his nuptials with his young queen, whence every thing solemn or gloomy was purposely banished, and the edifice made to emulate the purity and delicate beauty of the fair personage for whose marriage it was erected.

Many protest against the whiteness of the Duomo, and assert that it is painfully glaring to the eyes, but to mine it did not produce this effect; nay, the purity of the snow-like pinnacles standing out from the deep azure of the sky, invested the building with greater charms, to my taste.

We drove to see the Duomo by moonlight, last night, and it lost nothing of its beauty, beheld by that mild luminary. Some portion of the building, with the statues that rest on it, were thrown into shade, while others stood out in bold relief, glittering like silver beneath the moonbeams.

Let fastidious critics say what they will, the effect of this cathedral is, at least in my eyes, charming; and the only defect I can consent to admit is, that it is not completed. Whether seen by daylight, in all the glowing radiance of a summer sky, or by moonlight, it strikes me as being equally beautiful; and I can only wonder how people can be found who are so insensible to the general effect, as to dwell on the defects of the details which they detect. The truth is, one half of the travellers who infest Italy are more anxious to lay claim to connoisseurship, by the easiest of all modes, that of finding fault with what pleases the mass, than to indulge in the natural as well as rational pleasure, which the sight of fine objects confers.

The first awaking in a new place the morning after arrival, gives a very agreeable sensation. Anticipations of fresh beauties to be seen, new information to be acquired, present themselves to the imagination almost on opening the eyes, and impart such an impulse to the mind, that one starts with much more than ordinary activity from bed, and hastens through the operations of the toilette with unusual alacrity. Great, indeed, is the enjoyment of travelling, particularly in a country

and a *basso-rilievo* of the Emperor Francis of Austria entering Milan in triumph, being substituted for one of Napoleon according Peace to the Emperor Francis.

The triumphal car has six horses attached to it, and a horse mounted by a figure of Fame is placed at each angle. The execution of the whole is admirable, and reflects great credit on those employed on it. It was designed by the Marquis Luigi Cagnola, and executed by the sculptor Sangiorgio and the founders Manfredini, the *basso-rilievo* being the work of Pacetti and Monti, of Ravenna, and of Marchesi, Acquisti, and Pizzi, artists of Milan. The pure white of the marble employed in the Arco della Pace increases the beauty of the effect; and even the large blocks scattered around the base of the arch, though unpolished, display this peculiarity, many of them shining like fragments of alabaster.

When looking on the designs of the Marquis Luigi Cagnola for this arch, it is impossible not to wish that it was completed; or to repress a sigh to the memory of *him* whose victories furnished so many subjects for the painter and sculptor, and whose liberality encouraged the extension of the fine arts.

The Arena, or Circus, which we went over to-day, was designed as a place of amusement for the public; it is of vast extent, and is said to be capable of containing above thirty thousand people. It can be used as a Naumachia when desired, the water being laid on in a few minutes, and also serves for races, or other exhibitions.

I have nowhere seen any monuments of modern art so well calculated to give one an idea of those of ancient times as the Arco della Pace and the Arena. They are magnificent ornaments to Milan, and add greatly to its attractions.

The public garden is one of the many benefits conferred on Milan by her late Viceroy the Prince Eugène Beauharnois, who judiciously carried into effect many of the suggestions of Napoleon for the beautifying of the town. The public garden is situated on the left of the Corso, and is inclosed from the street by granite pillars and ornamented iron railing, with a frieze, on which are placed antique vases. It is tastefully and judiciously laid out, affords abundant shade, is well watered, and the buildings for public amusements are spacious and convenient.

This garden opens into a public walk of long extent on the ramparts, and is in the immediate vicinity of the Villa Reale,

Borgia, protesting against the truth of the charges preferred against her, and exhibiting a gold medallion in which were some twenty fair hairs, resembling fine threads of gold; which he assured us he obtained with great difficulty from the ringlet at the Ambrosian library, and which he valued highly, and always wore.

Nine or ten letters from Lucretia Borgia to the Cardinal Bembo, are placed with the lock of hair which she sent to him; and offer a strange mixture of sentimentality and pedantry, not exempt from levity. The writing is fine and characteristic, though less beautiful than Byron described it to be. These mementos of woman's weakness, preserved in a monastic institution, among so many treasures of erudition, divert the attention from objects perhaps more deserving it, but which excite it less; for the mind is ever prone to turn to all that recalls to us the similarity of the human heart in all times, and in all countries, as we sympathise more with weaknesses of our fellow-creatures than with their strength.

The vices that stained the lives of the father, mother, and brothers of Lucretia Borgia, could not fail to cast a dark shade over hers, and with a candid mind this reflection must operate to prevent a belief of the guilt for which she was arraigned, even though that guilt were less heinous than it is asserted to have been; for depraved indeed must be the mind that can give credit to such monstrous crimes, and not attribute the existence of such charges to the fearful reputations of that father and those brothers in whose iniquity her name has been mingled. History offers nothing like evidence, much less proof, that she took part in the death of one of her husbands, the unfortunate Alphonso of Arragon, said to have been assassinated by the desire of her father, and brother, Cæsar Borgia, and her affectionate treatment to her son by him, has never been doubted.

Her divorce from John Sforza was willed by Alexander VI., for political motives, and any resistance on her part, had she been disposed to offer it, would have been unavailing with a man who allowed no appeal from his decisions. To her husband, Alphonso of Este, her conduct has been represented as irreproachable; and must have so been, to have enabled her to escape the general disposition to censure directed to her by past reports and aspersions.

So fearful is the obloquy heaped on the head of Lucretia Borgia, that, as a woman, I cannot yield credence to her having merited it; and leave to others the disagreeable task of commenting on a history so derogatory to her sex.

A voluminous manuscript of Leonardo da Vinci, filled with sketches, proving that not only as a painter, but as an engineer, he had arrived at great excellence, was shown to us. This book contains various drawings of hydraulic, astronomical, and optical instruments, as well as notes written in Leonardo's own hand. This is the manuscript for which Addison states King James I. offered three thousand Spanish pistoles.

The diversity of Leonardo's knowledge, and the rare excellence he had attained in the different sciences he had studied, rendered Leonardo da Vinci one of the most distinguished men of his day; and on beholding this proof of the versatility of his genius, one feels an increased admiration for those pictures of his, which would have commanded our warmest praise had they alone been his sole productions.

The lament of Victoria Accaromboni, on the murder of her husband, is not the least interesting of the manuscripts in the Ambrosian library. All that history relates of this beautiful and unfortunate woman, leaves a painful impression of her having known, if not consented, to the crime that abridged his life; and consequently, renders this lament of hers a very curious document. Victoria Accaromboni was the wife of Francesco Perretti, nephew to the Cardinal Montalte, afterwards Sextus V. Remarkable for her beauty and fascination of manner, Paolo Jourdano Orsini, Duke of Bracciano, became enamoured of her; and is said to have caused the assassination of Perretti, who was one night murdered in the street at Rome.

As Orsini was suspected to have strangled his wife, the fair and gifted Isabella de' Medici, some six years previously to the murder of Perretti, this new accusation was received with more readiness; and when five years after Victoria Accaromboni publicly became his wife, it met with general credence.

The Duke of Bracciano survived this marriage little more than a year, and died at Salo, on the Lake of Garda, bequeathing a large dowry to his widow. Little more than two months after his death, the Duchess, then residing at Padua, with one of her brothers, Flaminio Accaromboni, was attacked by forty men in masks; who, surrounding the house, entered by a



window, and murdered the brother and sister, refusing the latter her agonised request for time to offer up a prayer to Heaven.

This crime was instigated by Ludovico Orsini, a near relative of the Duke of Bracciano, who having shut himself up in his dwelling with his retainers and vassals, sustained a siege for some days. After nearly all his partisans had fallen beneath the ruins of the house, which was shattered by the soldiers employed by the civil power, he was taken and sentenced to be strangled in three hours afterwards. The marriage of Virginio, the young Duke of Bracciano, son of Paolo Jourdano Orsini and Isabella de' Medici, with Flavia Perretti, the niece of the murdered husband of Victoria Accaromboni, and grand niece of the Pope, was a stroke of policy effected by the Cardinal Ferdinand de' Medici, who thus healed the wounds still rankling in the heart of the Pope, for the loss of his favourite nephew.

Went again to the Ambrosian library, in the garden of which the Abbé Bentivoglio pointed out to us the copper palm-tree described by Lalande as a real tree, and citing its verdure in winter as a proof of the mildness of the climate at Milan.

Some large volumes of painted flowers, well executed, and a collection of miniatures to illustrate a manuscript of the Iliad, were shown us. These last are of great antiquity, and have considerable merit. We also saw the museum, which has the cartoon of the school of Athens, and some very beautiful pictures by Bernardino Luini.

I know of few modes of passing a morning more agreeable, than that of spending it in a library, or museum, containing rare and interesting objects; with a *cicerone* to point out what best merits attention, and who has patience enough to permit one to remain as long as is wished.

The erudition, good taste, and agreeable manners of the Abbé Bentivoglio render a visit to the Ambrosian library peculiarly delightful; and we have to thank him for some very pleasant hours passed in it.

Went over the picture gallery of the Brera to-day, and was much gratified by the interesting collection of works by the early painters. These pictures, painted *al fresco*, have been cut from the walls they originally graced, and offer not only fine models of art, but teach how similar valuable works may be preserved by following the ingenious mode practised in their

case. Some of the faces in these pictures, particularly those by Luini, are charming.

The Marriage of the Virgin, by Raphael, painted in his youth, is an exquisite picture; though in many parts of it the spectator is reminded of Pietro Perugino, by a certain indescribable quaintness that appertains more or less to the draperies and attitudes of some of the figures.

This picture illustrates a tradition that the Virgin was instructed in a dream, that out of the numerous suitors she should bestow her hand on him amongst them whose wand should bear lilies. The Virgin is attended by several young maidens of singular beauty, and Joseph, whose wand alone has flowered, has excited the envy and jealousy of his competitors; who display their disappointment by discontented looks, and one of whom angrily breaks his wand. The Virgin is the very personification of loveliness and modesty, and the whole picture is charming.

A German artist was completing a very fine copy of it for the Emperor of Austria, the possession of which I could not help envying him.

The engraving of this picture by Longhi, is admirable, preserving, as it does in a wonderful manner, the delicacy and purity of the original.

A striking contrast to the Marriage of the Virgin is offered in an inimitable picture by Guarino, representing Hagar and her child driven forth by Abraham. In Hagar, is portrayed the creature of deep and passionate emotion, the indignation of the wronged woman, being mingled with the grief of the mother, who, in her sentence of banishment, mourns less for herself than her son; her glance at Abraham is full of reproach, and anger seems to have half scorched the lids on which tears are still hanging. How different is the character of her beauty, for she is very beautiful, from that of the Virgin, in the picture of Raphael. In the one beams the maiden purity that has never been sullied by the breath of passion, the repose never stirred by even a thought of love; while in the other stands confessed, the woman who has "loved not wisely, but too well," who has sinned, and like all who have so done, been punished by him who caused the sin.

I remember Lord Byron's telling me that he had been greatly struck with this picture, and that he considered it full of poetry.

I saw in the gallery of the Brera a painting, the name and artist unknown, so precisely similar in face and head-dress to the Cenci in the Barberini Palace at Rome, that it must have been meant for the same person. The features and expression, and the redness of eyelids denoting grief, which characterise the portrait at Rome, are to be found in this; the only difference is, that a painter's palette is on the thumb of the female.

This similarity throws, in my opinion, great doubt on the authenticity of the picture in the Barberini Palace, on which I had so often gazed with admiration and pity.

A Dance of Cupids, by Albano, is an exquisite painting; and a head of the Eternal Father, by Bernardo Luini, is very grand.

Went to the Duomo to-day, to see the subterranean chapel in which are preserved the mortal remains of Saint Carlo Borromeo. Inclosed in a sarcophagus of rock crystal, a perfect view is afforded of the figure, which is attired in pontifical robes, glittering with brilliants; and the head, on which is a mitre, rests on a pillow of gold. Strange mixture of what is most costly and indestructible, with what is most worthless and corruptible! This decoration of frail clay, from which the spirit has fled, has always struck me as being barbarous, and decreases, rather than promotes, my respect for the dead.

Carlo Borromeo was one of the most remarkable men to whom Italy has ever given birth: and those who might be disposed to undervalue the canonised saint, must feel a reverence for the memory of the man, whose patriotism, courage, and charity entitle his name to the esteem of posterity. Elevated to the rank of Cardinal at the early age of twenty-two, his conduct justified the partiality of his uncle, Pope Pius IV., who conferred this dignity on him. As a scholar, no less than as a divine, was this excellent man distinguished: but his courageous and unceasing exertions during the plague that ravaged his country in 1576, are beyond all praise. These are remembered with a feeling of lively admiration, that the costly trappings and brilliant diamonds which decorate his remains might fail to awaken for the saint: and we turned from the crystal sarcophagus, and its glittering ornaments, to reflect on the more imperishable monument of his virtues, the same they have left behind.

I could not contemplate the crucifix, borne by this good and great man in the procession during the fearful plague, without

a sentiment of profound reverence. It is carefully preserved under a glass case; and, I confess, appears to me to be a far more befitting monument than the costly sarcophagus of rock crystal, to the glory of him, who, actuated by his deep faith in it, was enabled to fulfil duties from which the less pious and charitable shrunk back in terror,

The statue, now called St. Bartholomeo, and said to have been that of Marsyas, is a most disagreeable object; and so unlike the general character of Greek sculpture, that I cannot believe the assertion that Praxiteles was the author of it.

A curious and beautiful piece of needlework, representing the birth of the Virgin, reminded me of the productions of our own Miss Linwood. This ingenious fabric is also due to a woman, whose name I have forgotten, and was executed in the early part of the seventeenth century.

I pass over the other objects of interest contained in the Duomo, which have been so often described as to leave nothing new to be said of them: and I acknowledge that I left a long inspection of the whole with little regret, to ascend to the roof of the church, which commands a magnificent view. It was refreshing to the spirits, as well as delightful to the eye, to contemplate the rich and glowing plains of Lombardy, stretched out like a vast garden, bounded by the Alps and Appenines, blue as the sky that canopied them; while the spiral pinnacles, with their delicate tracery, and the multitude of statues, all white as the snow that still capped the highest points of the Alps, afforded a striking and beautiful contrast to the glorious landscape: Art and Nature both displaying their wonders.

Went to-day to Santa Maria Belle Grazie, in the refectory of which is the celebrated fresco of the Last Supper, by Leonardo da Vinci. Injured as this picture is by time, it still bears evidence of the wondrous power of that great master; and, alas! also of the barbarity of the monks, who had a door cut through it, for the convenience of having their repasts served by a shorter route from the kitchen. What renders this profanation still more sacrilegious is, that the door has been made through the legs of our Saviour! The heads of Christ and St. John even now, faded as they are, retain their divine expression, and attest the skill of Leonardo.

Went over the palace of the Archduke to-day, erected as a residence for Prince Eugène Beauharnois, whose memory is still fondly cherished at Milan. The apartments are numerous

and fine, and the staircase admirable. The ceilings and many of the rooms owe their decoration to a Milanese artist, named Appiani, whose productions, if not in the purest taste, are at least striking and effective. In one of his frescos, the Assembly of the Gods, the head of the Emperor Napoleon has been given to Jove, and the likeness is well preserved.

Prince Eugène Beauharnois was a liberal patron, as well as a good connoisseur, of the fine arts, which made a rapid progress towards perfection during his government of Milan, and the artists still remember with gratitude the protection and encouragement which he afforded them. This encouragement was the more praiseworthy, when his great admiration for the works of the old masters was taken into consideration.

The whole family of Beauharnois have had the happy art of making themselves beloved wherever they have resided; an art, the consequences of which outlive the power confessed, even by their enemies, to have always been exercised with justice and humanity. The strong affection inspired by the Empress Josephine in the breasts of all who approached her is universally allowed, and her daughter, the ex-Queen of Holland, even in the seclusion to which she has retired, is followed by the attachment and respect of all who know her.

The Prince Eugène, her brother, has left behind him, at Milan, a reputation that will long be remembered with affection and gratitude, by a people to whose happiness he for many years so largely contributed.

Drove to the Simmonetta this evening. It is about a mile from Milan, and offers an example, now becoming very rare, of the taste of former ages in their country houses. This is the very one that a romance writer would select for the scene of a novel descriptive of the manners of some two centuries ago, and being unspoilt by any attempt of modernising it, is peculiarly interesting. It is much frequented on account of its wonderful echo, the repetitions of which are more frequent, and the sounds clearer, than any I had ever previously heard. The reverberations become more distinct towards their close; like memory, which recalls most vividly the events of years gone by.

Returning from the Simmonetta, the grass and leaves at each side of the road were sparkling with countless thousands of lucioli, which emitted a most brilliant light; and reminded

me of our pleasant evening rides in the vicinity of Pisa, where these fire-flies abound.

We went to La Scala last night, where was represented the opera of the *Ultimo Giorno di Pompeii*, the music of which is highly creditable to Pacini; and some portions of it were, admirably sung by a male voice with more exquisite pathos in it than I ever previously heard.

La Scala is a very fine theatre, but though said to be larger than our Opera House in London, did not strike me as being so. What did strike me, was the superiority of its decorations and cleanliness over ours; as also the freshness and richness of the costumes and scenery, and their perfect propriety. A severe attack of headache prevented me from waiting for the ballet, and sent me home to try the efficacy of my old remedy of Hungary water applied to the temples.

Spacious as are the boxes, and well ventilated as La Scala is, I found the heat so oppressive that I do not intend again exposing myself to it; even to hear the dulcet sounds of the exquisite voice of last night, or to see a young *danseuse*, who excites a great sensation here.

Went to Pavia yesterday. The route to it is extremely pleasant, passing by the side of a clear and wide canal, bordered by trees, that afford a shade from the too fervid rays of the sun, which already is become very troublesome. The Tesino is as limpid, but much more rapid than we expected to find it, from the poetical description of Silius Italicus, with which all the old books of travels in Italy favour us; and its rapidity greatly exceeds its beauty, in my opinion. The vividness of the verdure too, through which the Tesino glides, adds to its attraction; as do also the magnificent Lombardy poplars, which are the giants of the fertile plains casting their vast shadows around.

Pavia, once the capital of Lombardy, though shorn of its ancient splendour, still offers considerable interest to the traveller. It boasts no less than three colleges, the Borromeo, Caccia, and Ghisliero. We went over the first, which is highly honourable to the munificence of the founder, St. Carlo Borromeo, whose memory is not less venerated at Pavia than at Milan. This college, on which no expense has been spared, is a fine specimen of the architecture of the time; spacious and imposing on the exterior, the interior does not disappoint the

expectations raised. The great hall is truly splendid, and is appropriately decorated with frescos by Zuccari, representing scenes from the life of its saintly founder.

Our *cicerone* pointed out to us the tower in which it is said that Boethius was confined, and wrote his "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*." But as Boethius was imprisoned by Theodoric in 524, and this tower is evidently modern, we could not yield credence to our *cicerone's* assertion, that here the Roman consul suffered incarceration for the defence of his tenets against the Arians. The tomb of this great and good man has also disappeared; but while his "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*" may be read, his memory will find a shrine in the hearts of those who peruse it.

*Apropos* of Boethius and his opposition to the Arians; a *basso-rilievo* was pointed out to us on the exterior of the church of St. Michael, representing the Annunciation, in which the child is so grown as to remind one of the doctrine of that sect.

Some curious frescos ornament the interior of the church, and are the work of a native of Pavia, contemporary with Giotto. Pavia, like most other towns in Italy, is more ambitious to put forth claims to the possession of antiquities than scrupulous respecting their authenticity. Our *cicerone* was prepared *à rompre une lance*, when we evinced some symptoms of incredulity at his assertion that an old pole with an iron point, preserved in the cathedral, was the lance of Roland, and recited a long but unsatisfactory story to prove it.

In the cathedral we also saw the tomb said to be that of St. Augustine, but which finds many persons as sceptical as to its having been really the monument of that pious saint as we are relative to that of Roland. It is a very curious and interesting work, richly decorated with innumerable *bassi-rilievi*, and nearly one hundred statues, and bears evidence of having been executed in the latter part of the fourteenth century. To this epoch is also due the noble bridge that spans the Tessino, which is covered and supported by granite columns.

On returning to the inn, rather fatigued with the exertion of walking and sight-seeing, we found an invitation from the celebrated Dr. Scarpa, to whom we had sent a letter of introduction from a mutual friend. We availed ourselves of it, and received from him a cordial as well as a polite reception. This clever and remarkable man, now in his eighty-first year, the

contemporary and friend of the celebrated Professor Volta, has lately declined practising his profession ; a circumstance that is considered to be very injurious, not only to science, but to the interest of his native town, to which the fame of his skill as a physician and oculist drew many visitors to seek relief from his advice. Tall and slight, with a very prepossessing countenance, and locks silvered by age, intelligence still sparkles in his eyes, and animates his conversation, which is as unafected as it is interesting. Without evincing the least pedantry, he entered into a lively *résumé* of the state of science in Italy at present. He showed an equally perfect knowledge of its advance in England and France, named several of our most distinguished professional men, among whom was my old and valued friend, Mr. Guthrie, with warm admiration ; and referred to some recent discoveries in science with peculiar satisfaction.

We expressed our regret that he should have declined to practise his profession while yet his health enabled him to fulfil its duties ; and he answered, " I wish to enjoy some repose before death comes. I think I have earned it, for a long life has been passed, I hope, not without use to my fellow mortals ; but at eighty-one I cannot calculate on many more years being granted to me, and the few that may be allowed I will pass tranquilly on the *isthmus* of existence—old age, waiting the summons that must soon come. But you must see my pictures, they are now my hobby ; every age has its toys, and I confess I have a childish pleasure in mine."

The collection is small, but very choice, and the doctor greatly enjoyed our praises. A magnificent portrait of Tibaldo Tibaldei, was his favourite, and he entered into its merits with all the *gusto* of a connoisseur. We resisted a pressing invitation to remain a day or two at Pavia ; and took leave of the excellent Professor Scarpa, highly impressed with a sense of his abilities and amiable manners.

It is pleasant to behold a man in the evening of a well-spent life, standing as it were on the threshold of eternity, cheerfully and calmly awaiting the summons. \*

The plain on which the battle of Pavia took place was pointed out to us,—that battle in which the gallant Francis I. lost, as he wrote to his mother, "all, save honour!" A man scarcely less chivalrous than Francis I. took a distinguished



part in this action. I refer to the Marquis Pescara, the idolised husband of the beautiful and gifted Victoria Colonna; whose sonnet on his death describes his merit and her grief so eloquently, as to excite a warm sympathy for both, in the breasts of all who read it. England, too, sent a knight to moisten with his brave blood the battle-field of Pavia; but where has English blood not been shed? This valiant knight was Sir Richard de la Pole, rightful heir to the dukedom of Suffolk, being brother to the earl who suffered death during the reign of Henry VIII. Long banished from England, Sir Richard assumed the title of Duke of Suffolk, which had been attainted under the reign of Henry VI., and lost his life at the battle of Pavia. It reflects credit on the memory of the Constable of Bourbon, who, though opposed to him, so admired his valour in the field, that he had his remains honourably interred, and followed them to the grave attired in mourning.

I confess that the battle of Pavia was invested with additional interest to me, by the circumstance of an Englishman's distinguishing himself there; and on gazing on the field, and recalling this event to memory, I felt as when on a distant shore, among strangers from many lands, I heard the language of my own spoken by one of its wayfaring sons.

I have rarely passed a more agreeable day than yesterday at the Certosa. It is a magnificent church and convent, formerly belonging to the Carthusians, and was suppressed by the Emperor Joseph II., who confiscated its enormous revenue. It is about fifteen miles distant from Milan, and three or four from Pavia, near to the memorable spot on which the battle was fought. This splendid edifice is situated in a noble park, resembling that of a fine English country seat, with umbrageous trees feathering down to the grassy mound beneath them. Ornaments of every kind have been lavished on it; and it presents one of the most striking and imposing pictures imaginable, surrounded by the deep verdure of the park and its fine trees, the soothing silence of the scene only broken by the chirping of innumerable birds.

This splendid building owes its erection to John Galeas Visconti, Duke of Milan; and was perhaps meant as an atonement, if not a bribe, to win pardon for sins, which if not of a deep dye in a political point of view, must ever be so considered in a moral one. He who is accused of imprisoning his uncle, in

order to seize his territory, and of administering poison to the son of that uncle, after having treacherously got him into his power, could not have had a quiet conscience, and must consequently have been anxious to make a peace-offering to the Deity he had so fearfully offended.

It is reported, however, that Galeas Visconti, like many other successful sinners, was more intent on enjoying the fruits of his iniquity, than of offering any atonement for it; and that it was to gratify his wife Catherine, the daughter of the uncle whose dominions he had usurped, that he undertook to erect this stately pile. Catherine, like our own Mary, the wife of him who deposed her father, could fill without shuddering the throne of her parent; and dwell in the palaces rife with the recollections of the days of childhood and adolescence, when that parent was not only loving but beloved! Surely thrones must have some secret and powerful spell thus to silence the cries of nature in the heart!

The foundation of the Certosa occurred in 1396, and Galeas Visconti himself laid the first stone, attended by a grand *cortège* of all the clergy of the neighbouring towns. In 1399 he endowed the convent with a liberal provision, payable from his own fortune, for the maintenance of twenty-four monks and a prior; which provision he secured to them in his will, executed in 1402, only a few days previous to his death, which took place in his 47th year. He added a codicil, that a certain sum should be yearly expended for the completion of the Certosa, and that when finished, this fund should be annually distributed among the poor.

It is said that the most celebrated sculptors in Italy were employed during three centuries in ornamenting the *façade* of the church; so that generation after generation disappeared ere the stately pile that now delights the eyes of the traveller was finished. But if the exterior of the edifice is calculated to charm, the interior is still more beautiful; for the rarest marbles, alabasters, mosaics, sculpture, carvings in ivory, busts in gold, silver, bronze, and *pietro-duro*, inlaid with precious gems, paintings, and gilding are lavishly distributed all over it.

The church is in the form of a Latin cross, and has three naves. The arms of the cross are finished by two grand altars; and fourteen chapels, seven at each side, occupy the remaining part of the church. In the centre of the cross rises

a cupola, divided into eight compartments; each of which is covered by frescos, representing the visions of St. John, executed by Casolan, of Sienna.

The roof of the whole church is painted in the brightest ultra-marine blue, studded with golden stars, which has the most brilliant effect; and the riches that everywhere meet the eye are positively dazzling. Vain would be the attempt to enumerate even half the treasures of the Certosa, all its walls being literally incrustated with objects of art and beauty. It is related that Francis I., when taken prisoner at the battle of Pavia, which was fought in the park near the Certosa, requested to be allowed to offer up his prayers in the church. I thought of this circumstance, and the temple acquired a new interest from the recollection. There is something touching in such a trait of devotion, while the mind of the gallant monarch was still smarting under the humiliation of defeat, which makes one feel an increased admiration for him.

To stand in the centre of this gorgeously decorated temple, not a portion of which is left uncovered by rare and precious works, glittering with the prismatic hues thrown on them from the richly stained windows, through which an Italian sun is casting his golden beams; and to hear no sounds save the echoes of our footsteps, and the monotonous voice of the *conciërge*, as he slowly repeats his description, one might fancy himself in the palace of a dethroned monarch; whose vast riches accumulated in this shrine had excited the envy of some wizard, who had touched them with his wand of enchantment, causing them to remain for ages in solitude, as a memento of the ostentation of him who had willed them to be placed here as trophies of his vainglory.

The monument erected to John Galeas Visconti, the founder of the Certosa, by the monks, proves that these sons of the Church forgot the sins of the man in their gratitude for the benefactions he conferred on their order: thus offering a dangerous example that guilt of a deep dye might be pardoned by the ministers of religion of former times, provided it was accompanied by generosity to the Church. This monument was raised a century after the death of the Duke Visconti, and is only a cenotaph; for when the remains were to be disinterred for the purpose of being placed in the sarcophagus within this splendid tomb, they could nowhere be found; all trace of the

spot in which they had been buried being lost, a proof of the little interest the death of this wicked man had occasioned.

This monument was designed by Galeas Pelegrini, but several artists were employed in its execution. Six *bassi-rilievi*, representing the most remarkable of the praiseworthy actions of Visconti, ornament the mausoleum; and each has an inscription explanatory to the action represented. These *bassi-rilievi* are said to be the work of La Porta; and the trophies, arabesques, and foliage, which are lavishly spread over the whole, are by Romano. A statue of Visconti, the size of life, reposes on the tomb; and on each side are seated a statue of Victory and Fame, by Bernardino da Novi.

The deserted temple, and the vacant tomb, struck me as offering a curious and remarkable lesson on the vanity of human intentions. The one raised by its wicked founder more in ostentation than piety, and meant to excite the wonder and admiration of succeeding generations, is now seldom opened, except to be shown to the few travellers who journey from Milan to behold it; and the other, erected by the monks to receive the bones of their unworthy benefactor, empty!

The Lavatojo, or washing-room of the monks, partakes of the general character of the church, being covered with *bassi-rilievi*; and the roof is of ultramarino, interspersed with gold stars. Among the windows, a magnificent one of stained glass by Matteis, represents St. Bernard with Satan; and is a fine specimen of the work of the fourteenth century. The door of the Lavatojo is of marble, admirably sculptured by Amadeo.

The splendour of the decorations of the fourteen chapels equals those of the rest of the building; and the eyes are absolutely fatigued with the multiplicity of rare and precious objects that court their glance. It was a relief to find ourselves in the dwellings allotted to the monks; the plainness and simplicity of which offered an agreeable contrast to the gorgeous temple we had quitted. These are twenty-four in number, and are behind the cloisters, which serve as porticos to them. Each dwelling is apart, and consists of two small rooms, a little garden in which is a fountain, and a marble bench.

These gardens are now little wildernesses of flowers, many of them so closely interwoven as to conceal the earth; and in the tangled mazes of flowers and shrubs innumerable birds were flitting, and sending forth notes of joy.

The repose and stillness of these cells had an indescribable charm; and made me feel that the life of a cenobite, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," might not be as destitute of enjoyment as many people imagine it to be. I should only add a plentiful supply of books, to render such an abode not only bearable, but agreeable for those who are no longer in the heyday of youth; and who have experienced that the illusions of life, once known to be such, leave a regret behind that well fits the mind for solitude and contemplation.

Each garden bore evidence that a love of nature dwelt in the breasts of the inhabitants of these abodes; and who, deprived of other pleasures, sought the pure and innocent one to be found in the cultivation of flowers, that, frail as they are, were to outlive the mortals who cherished them.

I loitered long in these cells, reflecting on the probable destinies and condition of their former tenants; and a little romance of each was imagined, as I reposed where they had spent so many solitary hours. If such an impossibility as the discovery of twenty-four friends could be accomplished, how happy might they be here! each occupying his or her cell, into which no one should intrude uninvited, the general meeting when desired taking place in one of the apartments in the building allotted to the reception of visitors, and the repasts being served from the refectory.

But alas! whoever had twenty-four *real* friends? and among those whose cultivation of mind most fit them for the enjoyment of a life of seclusion and study, how few are exempt from the jealousies *du métier*, which render a near neighbourhood so dangerous a trial of friendship? Without a similarity of tastes, such a proximity of residence would be unbearable, and with it, how long would harmony continue? Alas! for poor, poor human nature, I fear my desire of peopling the cells of the Certosa must be abandoned for some less Utopian scheme.

The building designed for the reception of strangers, and occupation of the Prior, is separated by a magnificent vestibule from the cloisters which form the porticos of the dwellings of the monks. These porticos are divided by columns, and their arches and cornices are ornamented by small statues, busts, foliage, and *bassi-relievi* in *terra cotta* finely modelled and executed. The court of the fountain is also richly decorated with *bassi-relievi* in *terra cotta*, and has a very pretty effect. We brought a cold collation with us, which was spread on a table

in the centre of this court; and our Italian servants, with that natural taste for the picturesque which appertains to them, ornamented the repast with flowers plucked from the neglected gardens of the monks.

We spent a long summer's day at the Certosa, one of those summer's days only to be seen or felt in Italy; where the blue heavens above us produce an exhilaration of spirits that precludes gloomy reflections, though it disposes the mind to calm contemplation. A gentle breeze fanned the leaves of the stately trees around, and waved the long grass springing up between the stones of the pavement; the cows feeding in the park, lowed as the hour for yielding their rich milk approached; the voices of the playful children of the *custode* mingled with the sounds, as they frolicked gaily about; and there rose that stately *façade*, the glories of the setting sun throwing tints, half golden, half crimson, over its sculptured wall, as we threw on it our last and lingering look.

We saw to-day a basin and ewer, the work of Benvenuto Cellini, and exquisite they are. They are proved to have been the identical "*bacino e bacealeto*," presented to Francis I., by an engraving of them shown us by Signor Morose, executed during the life of that sovereign. The basin and ewer do not appear to me to have been intended to match, the subjects being totally different; nor, truth to say, though I know this opinion may be deemed an unpardonable scepticism, do they seem to have been designed or executed by the same hand. The basin is ornamented by an inimitably chiselled representation of the seasons, and the occupations of rural life. These reminded me of the charming Idyls of Gessner; and the beauty of the grouping, and the care bestowed in the execution of it, evince the artist's love of his subject. The ewer is adorned by heroic emblems and figures, and the chiselling struck me as being much less sharp than that of the basin.

We were told that these admirable works were sold at the melting price, that is, as old silver; and that within a recent period the sum of three thousand pounds had been offered for them. The Duke of Devonshire, it is said, wishes to become their owner, but so large a sum (five thousand pounds) is demanded for them, that no purchaser has yet been found. Good as is the taste of the Duke of Devonshire, and vast as is his fortune, both are considerably exaggerated in France and Italy; where every dealer in curiosities imagines that in his

Grace will be found a ready buyer of any thing rare, however enormous may be the price demanded for it.

We went yesterday to Monza, and took with us an order to see the celebrated iron crown. On the road we passed through Greco; and stopped to view some very fine frescos by Bernardino Luini.

The town of Monza, though silent and deserted, is full of interest, as offering so many traces of the Lombards; and this very silence and solitude is not only in harmony with the aspect of the place, but better disposes the mind to the contemplation of the objects it contains, and the reflections they awaken. .

The royal villa is outside the town, and is approached by a long avenue of stately trees. It owes all the beauty of its apartments and grounds to the good taste of Prince Eugène Beauharnois, who rendered it a most agreeable residence, and who loved to resort to it as a refuge from the cares of state. The history of *Psyche*, by Appiani, ornaments the orangery, and has a very good effect.

The cathedral, founded by Theodolinda, contains many curious objects, but none to which so much interest is attached as the iron crown; that crown which encircled the brow of the chosen husband of Theodolinda, bestowed on him unsought, by her who was compelled to the delicate and painful office of announcing to him the honour she designed to confer on him, and which bound the laurelled brows of Charles V. and Napoleon.

Theodolinda evinced a woman's wit and grace in the mode she adopted for making the overture of her hand to Agilulphus: nevertheless, the task must have been a trying one to feminine feelings. I ventured to hint this to one of the monks, who was relating the anecdote; but he gravely reminded me that the queen was a widow, and consequently not so timid or bashful as if she had not previously been married. "Besides, Signora," added he, "queens have no refusals to dread, and this Theodolinda well knew."

The following was the mode adopted by Theodolinda to offer her hand to Agilulphus. She ordered a precious cup, never used except by her royal self, to be filled with the rarest wine, and having taken a portion of its contents, she presented it with her own hand to him she had selected as her husband. Some persons are malicious enough to assert, that in placing it in his

hand, she allowed hers to give it a gentle pressure : while others insist that she turned towards his lips the side of the cup that her's had touched, in order that he might not by any possibility misunderstand her intentions, and so compel her to the painful necessity of avowing them by words. But these surmises (for they cannot be more than surmises) must be mere scandal; and I, for one, can never believe that the fair Theodolinda could commit such solecisms in feminine delicacy, as either to press the hand of Agigulphus, or turn to him the side of the cup which her lips had touched.

One thing, however, is quite clear, that Theodolinda must have been greatly beloved by her subjects, or they would not have authorised her to offer, not only her hand, but what they perhaps thought much more important, her crown, to any husband she might select : an example which I fear is not likely to be followed in modern times, in those countries where the Salique law does not exist, and in which subjects are so ungallant, as to leave nothing, save their hands and hearts, at the disposal of their queens; a want of gallantry which places the husbands selected in a much less enviable position than that filled by Agigulphus.

The iron crown, so designated from a ring of iron, made of the nails of the cross on which the Saviour suffered, is incased in gold, and beheld from such a distance as to offer only a glittering object flashing through the fumes of incense from the censers of the priests, and the less pleasant smoke of the torches held up to display it. The crown is contained in a huge cross placed over the altar, and is never touched without the celebration of a religious ceremony.

A priest, in full canonicals, attended by two others bearing torches, and some half-dozen white-robed boys, entered the church, the priests prostrated themselves before the altar, and prayed, while the sacristan mounted by a ladder to the cross, opened it, and displayed the crown.

To atone for not letting us see the real crown nearer, we were permitted to examine a copy of it; and more, were allowed to look at a cotton gown, said to have been worn by the Virgin, which is enshrined in a silver case, and which testifies that Raphael had better taste in attiring her than was evinced by herself, if we may judge by this specimen of it. This gown, to which so much value is attached by the clergy at Monza, is



evidently not more than two centuries old; but the people receive it as a most sacred relic, and question not its authenticity.

The gifts of various sovereigns and other pious persons were shown us, many of them of considerable value, but not remarkable either for good taste or fine workmanship. It would appear that the donors imagine that the saints to whom these offerings are made, or the clergy, their delegates, are either bad judges of such matters, or that they prefer the intrinsic value of gold and gems, to beautiful design and execution.

ARONA.—The colossal statue of St. Carlo Borromeo is well placed on the summit of a hill above the town of Arona, and seen at a distance has a very imposing effect. The saint is represented holding a book in one hand, while the other is extended in benediction; employments allegorical enough of his mission on earth, which was to enlighten and to bless. The statue looks grim and monstrous when approached, appearing, like other great men, to most advantage at a distance. I declined the proposal made by our *cicerone*, of ascending to the interior of the saint, having little curiosity to study the anatomy of his nose, or to look from the casements of his eyes, a ceremony generally undergone by most travellers.

The view from the base of the statue is very fine, and could this brazen giant, this "copper captain," see, he might be well pleased with the prospect selected for him.

On the steeple of one of the churches is an image of the Redeemer on the cross; which, unlike any that I have hitherto observed, is covered by a robe. The church of St. Mary has a piece of sculpture representing the Nativity, evidently the work of a very remote age, and highly interesting as a specimen of the revival of the art.

Arona is a prosperous town; its dockyard appears to afford employment to several hands, and its little port was filled with boats. The people are healthy-looking and well clad, and a spirit of active industry seems to animate them.

LAVENO.—We have spent a delicious day in viewing the Borromean islands, and never did finer weather occur for such an expedition. Not a breeze ruffled the smooth and pellucid water; which, like a vast mirror, was spread forth, reflecting

on its tranquil bosom the azure heavens above, and the shadows of the mighty Alps that bound them. How striking is the contrast afforded by these stupendous mountains, the work of the Almighty, and the palace and gardens, the works of art, that rise up from the crystal waters ! Terrace ranges above terrace, crowned with orange and lemon trees, intermingled with the most rare and odorous shrubs and plants, from which marble statues are seen peeping forth amid the bright foliage. They look like the dwellings of fairy queens, so gay and fantastic is their aspect ; which, in spite of the artificial appearance of the whole, is nevertheless charming.

I ventured to make this remark to one of our party, and was answered that, in his opinion, the lake resembled a vast plateau of looking-glass, with a rich *epergne* laden with bright flowers and fruit in the centre of it ; a comparison that struck me as peculiarly just.

The palace of *Isola Bella* is spacious, and richly decorated, but the taste displayed in it is meretricious ; and one turns with impatience from the contemplation of its finery, to admire the largest and most beautiful laurels I ever saw, and which are said to be indigenous.

*Isola Madre* has been less dressed by art than *Isola Bella*, and therefore pleased me more ; but *Isola Piscatore*, with its population of fishermen, surrounded by nets and boats, the implements of their profession, and destitute not only of all luxury but of what are deemed the common necessities of life, offers such a contrast to *Isola Bella* and its luxurious dwellings and gardens, as to bring painfully before the sojourners in the latter, the different destinies of the rich and the poor.

I have not enough of the epicurean philosophy in me to be able to enjoy the superfluities of wealth within sight of those denied all, save the scanty food obtained by a precarious trade, without feeling my pleasures disturbed by the view of their privation. Hence, were I the proprietor of the *Borromean Isles*, I would render the *Isola Piscatore* a less dreary spot, and the poverty of its inhabitants should not disturb my enjoyment.

It might, perhaps, offer a curious problem for a casuist to solve, whether the pain excited by the view of the poverty of others, as contrasted with our own luxuries, or the zest which this contrast sometimes imparts to our enjoyments, is most produced by selfishness. The sophist might argue, that the

displeasure of beholding poverty arises not so much from a generous pity for the objects of it, as from the *egoïsme* with which we are prone to turn from all that interrupts our gratification; and that those who taste their luxuries with a keener relish from seeing the privations of the unfortunate, are scarcely more abounding in selfishness. Nevertheless, the selfishness of the former may lead him to relieve the poverty, the sight of which disturbs his pleasures; while those of the latter being uninterrupted, he will be little disposed to remove the cause of the contrast, the effect of which gives a zest to his enjoyment. Consequently, the selfishness of the former is to be preferred, as producing advantage to others.

Having now established my case, almost as unintelligibly as sophists generally maintain their arguments, I will retire to my couch, to which a heaviness of the eyes, and stupidity of the intellect, warn me to have recourse. What a delicious day have I passed, floating over the unruffled water, our boat breaking the beautiful images reflected on its bosom: as a near approach to anticipated pleasures dispels the airy fabrics by Hope reared, and which dissolve when touched!

MILAN.—Again at Milan, to which we have retraced our steps, in order to receive the letters and parcels we expected from England. They are arrived safely, the first bringing the intelligence of the good health of those dear to us at home,—that dear word home, how readily does the pen trace it! and the second, pregnant with the well-known odours of mingled coal-smoke and Russia leather, peculiar to London parcels; which, though to the nostrils of strangers not breathing of “Araby the blest,” smell sweetly from the power of association possessed by those who are exiles, even though voluntary ones, from dear England!

Where'er I roam whatever realms to see,  
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee;  
Still to dear England turns with endless pain,  
And drags at each remove a length'ning chain.

It may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, that even when beholding the fairest scenery of this beautiful country, my mind reverts to home with increased tenderness; as if jealous of the admiration accorded by my taste to the objects that delight it.

To-morrow we set out on our route to Bologna, whence we proceed to Parma and Plaisance. Not a single wet day has marred the pleasure of our stay at Milan, or our expeditions in its delightful environs; and an unclouded sky and genial climate have kept us in good health and spirits. Travelling in Italy, except during the months of November and March, which are in general the worst in the whole year, is exempt from the annoyance of bad weather, so frequently experienced elsewhere. I have had my imperials soaked through in Belgium, and France, and in England, Scotland, and Ireland; have been dragged over roads imbedded with liquid mud, while ceaseless rain precluded the possibility of lowering the glass of the carriage to inhale the air; but in Italy, the constant beauty of the weather has rendered all my journeys through it delightful.

BOLOGNA.—This is a fine town, and its long arcades offer not only a pleasing decoration to the streets, but at this season a very agreeable refuge from the too fervid rays of the sun. We have arrived in time to see the fête of the Madonna, which is to be celebrated to-morrow; and an unusual bustle and activity prevail in the streets, owing to the extensive preparations. We walked out this evening, and were much struck with the picturesque effect of the porticos, seen by moonlight; and the various groups of gaily-dressed peasants walking under them, who have come to witness the festival. The tasteful dresses of these people, each group looking as if attired to be introduced in pictures, their gaiety, yet perfect decorum, and the sobriety of the men, with their polite attention to the women, pleased me much; and their conversation, in which simplicity and affection were equally prominent, as they spoke aloud, wholly regardless of the presence of strangers, was free from the least tinge of that coarseness, if not ribaldry, too often to be heard in other countries among persons of the same class of life.

We extended our promenade through a considerable portion of the porticos leading to the church of the Madonna di San Luca, which looked beautifully in the alternate light and shade produced by the moonbeams, while the view of the surrounding country was charming. Nor was music wanting to complete the romantic interest of the scene; for the sound of guitars frequently broke on the ear, accompanied by voices, which, if untutored, were not inharmonious. It was, indeed, an Italian night; and the scenes on which the bright and glorious moon

shone, were precisely such as the mind pictures to itself of Italy, before one has seen this beautiful land. Spires, minarets, towers, arches, and porticos, intermingled with stately palaces, and rich foliage; the dark hue of the latter rendering the whiteness of the porticos brilliant as Parian marble. The music, softened by distance, the picturesque costumes, and the pleasant sounds of this most musical language, a language which even from rudest lips never sounds vulgar, all, all combined to render this my first evening ramble at Bologna enchanting.

The thought occurred to me in one of those pauses I often made to contemplate the beautiful scenes presented to my delighted eyes, that years hence, when far, far from Italy, I may turn to the transcript of the impression it made on me, and narrate with a sigh the faint and imperfect description of what was then filling my mind with such deep admiration. Ah! would that my pen could render justice to my emotions! and then I might be able to convey to others some sense of that which has so strongly excited them; or renew in my own breast a portion of the pleasure experienced this night, in beholding what I cannot delineate.

The morning was ushered in by ringing of bells; and the streets are densely crowded by the people who are come to form the procession and to view it. From the windows of the houses, bright-coloured hangings of tapestry and damask are floating; all the peasants are attired in their holiday apparel, the variety and richness of the colours of which give the streets the appearance of a vast bed of tulips. Flags and banners of every dye, and with various symbols, are borne around by white-robed boys, and priests in silvery surplices and cloth of gold vestments. All is excitement and gaiety.—I must lay aside my pen, and go forth to behold the procession leave the church.

I have seen high mass celebrated in the church of St. Petronius, which was richly decorated for the occasion; the columns and pilasters being covered by draperies, and an abundance of ornaments scattered around the altars. The sacred edifice lost all the solemnity which appertains to one of its antiquity and magnitude; and resembled much more a place arranged for some theatrical exhibition, than a temple prepared to offer homage to the Most High. In this church was Charles V. crowned, a circumstance which I confess occurred

to me even while the mass was celebrating; and set my brain conjuring up the ceremony of that day, instead of dwelling on the one of this. The meridian of Cassini interested me more than a statue of Saint Petronius, to which our guide was anxious to draw my attention, and which is said to be an accurate likeness. If this statement be true, it proves the saint to have been no beauty.

The church was crowded to excess, but the conduct of the occupants was orderly and sober. No pushing, elbowing, or muttering. When the service was concluded, the procession was formed; and highly picturesque was its effect as it moved along. The gorgeous vestments of the priests, the bright tints of the innumerable banners floating in the air, the draperies suspended from the windows, the white-stoled boys bearing silver censers, followed by the monks of all the different orders in their various sombre-coloured robes, shaven crowns, and sandalled feet, contrasted with the gay dresses of the Contadini, formed a picture worthy of the glorious pencil of a Paul Veronese.

While viewing the procession beneath the arcades, I was inadvertently separated from my party, and found myself hurried along by the crowd, hemmed in at all sides by a moving mass of strangers, who seemed to eye me with much curiosity. To disentangle myself from the multitude would have been a difficult, if not an impossible task; and I confess I experienced a certain degree of trepidation inseparable from a woman's feelings at finding herself alone in the midst of a vast throng, not one face of which I had ever previously seen. Great then was my satisfaction at hearing the simple remark of, "We have had a very fine day for the fête," uttered in English, and with as good a pronunciation as possible, by a person having the air and dress of a clergyman, to another, who answered, "Yes, nothing could be more propitious than the weather."

Though it is always embarrassing to address a stranger, the sound of my own language, and the position in which I was placed, gave me courage to touch the arm of the first speaker, and to state to him, that being separated from my party, I must request the protection of my countryman. He turned round, saluted me graciously, said that, though not my countryman, he would gladly assist me to rejoin my party; and immediately placed me between him and his companion.

"You speak English perfectly, yet are not an English-

man," said I, "then you can be no other than Professor Mezzofanti."

Both he and his companion smiled; and he answered, "My name is Mezzofanti."

I had a letter of introduction to the Professor from a mutual friend, and intending to leave it for him in the course of the day, I had put it into my reticule, whence I immediately drew it and gave it to him. He knew the handwriting at a single glance, and with great good-breeding put the letter unopened into his pocket, saying something, too flattering for me to repeat; in which the remark that a good countenance was the best recommendation, was neatly turned. He presented his companion to me, who happened to be the Abbé Scandalaria, of Rome, then staying on a visit to him, and who speaks English remarkably well.

My party were not a little surprised to see me rejoin them, accompanied by, and in conversation with, two strangers. When I presented them to my new acquaintances, they were much amused at the recital of my unceremonious rencounter and self-introduction to Mezzofanti; who not only devoted a considerable portion of the day to us, but promised to spend the evening at our hotel, and invited us to breakfast with him to-morrow.

The countenance of this wonderful linguist is full of intelligence, his manner well-bred, unaffected, and highly agreeable. His facility and felicity in speaking French, German, and English, is most extraordinary, and I am told it is not less so in various other languages. He is a younger man than I expected to find him; and, with the vast erudition he has acquired, is totally exempt from pretension or pedantry.

As our stay here will be short, we have crowded into a few hours the view of palaces and churches, the inspection of which, with the treasures they contain, might well occupy many days: and now that I have hurried through them, so indistinct are the impressions they have left on my mind, that I am hardly able to recollect to which palace or church the pictures that most struck me appertain.

The Fava Palace, with its beautiful ceilings by Agostino, Annibal Caracci, and Albano, cannot be forgotten. The Aldrovandi Palace no longer contains the treasures it once boasted; and the Marescalchi collection has been stripped of nearly all

its best pictures. The Zampierri Palace has still some very fine ceilings by Guercino and the Caraccis. The Bacciocchi Palace has been recently repaired and newly furnished, and in point of comfort and elegance cannot be surpassed by any private residence in Europe. Its front is by Palladio, and reflects credit on him.

Two objects I more distinctly remember than the others, though they were certainly not among the most rare or valuable of the vast mass I beheld. One was a copy of the Medician Venus, dressed in a *robe-de-bal à la mode de Paris*! Never did I gaze on a more extraordinary figure than this fashionably attired Venus presented I and, hear it, ye fair ladies, who value yourselves on the smallness of your waists, the compression of which, by tight-lacing, has often proved as injurious to health as it always does to grace, the Venus looked not more unlike you, when dressed for a ball, than she does, when standing unattired, her gracefully curved but not unnaturally slim waist constitutes the very opposite to your constrained and artificial figures. "The statue that enchants the world" appeared, *en robe-de-bal*, to have an *embonpoint* that would cause the despair of most young ladies of the present day; and, in short, looked as unlike a modern belle as possible, though her robe was of *la dernière mode*. There was something positively ludicrous in the *ensemble*. All the beauty, elegance, and purity of the charming statue was lost; and Eve, when she first knew shame, and clothed herself, could not have looked more *gauche* than did this statue in its fine dress. There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous; and the owner of this copy of the Venus has made it.

The other object that I most distinctly remember, though its "whereabout" I have forgotten, was a picture representing a youthful couple in the bloom of health and beauty, surrounded by all appliances of luxury that wealth can furnish. Jewels, flowers, musical instruments, and favourite domestic animals are there; and the young pair seem wholly occupied by futile pleasures. Suddenly the *custode* touched a spring, the gay group retreated, and a second picture, representing the grinning skeletons of the persons and animals portrayed in the first, was revealed. This quick transition from a luxurious life to ghastly and hideous death, was very striking; and the jewels and other objects scattered around contrasted fearfully with the grinning skeletons near to which they were represented.



The Fountain of Neptune, by John of Bologna, is a fine work, and offers a curious example of the difference between the opinions of the man reputed the most pious of his time, and the owner of the dressed copy of the Venus de' Medici; for the fountain and its decorations were ordered by Saint Carlo Borromeo, when Legate at Bologna. Neptune is even more *nude* than the men of the present day in Italy and France, when they bathe; and the syrens who surround him are wholly undressed. I wonder that he who has commanded the Venus to be dressed, has not endeavoured to have Neptune and the syrens clothed! The modesty of some people is very immodest.

I resisted the entreaties of our *cicerone* to mount the Asinelli Tower, said to be the highest in Italy; a reason urged by him for ascending it. "Consider, Signora, the satisfaction of being able to say that you stood on the top of the highest tower in Italy—ay, in all Italy!" I was tempted to answer him, as a wit of modern times replied to a friend who urged him to descend into a lead or coal mine, I forget which, in order to be able to *say* that he had so done; adding, "I should not descend but for this purpose."—"O! if that is all," rejoined the wit, "why not affirm, as I shall do, that you *did* descend the mine. Thus you will have all the credit, without the risk or trouble of the undertaking."

The Garisenda Tower, not far from the Asinelli, inclines considerably from the perpendicular. This is said to have been caused by the sinking of the ground; but whether or not, for people maintain different opinions on the subject, it must be looked on with unusual interest, as having furnished a simile to Dante, who has beautifully used it.

Mezzofanti does not disappoint on acquaintance. He spent last evening with us, and his conversation is pregnant with information, modesty, and good sense. I should, however, be inclined to think that the facility in reading and speaking so many various languages which he has acquired, precludes his possession of any very profound knowledge. This assertion may appear paradoxical; but Mezzofanti may be likened to a man, who, possessed of the keys of a vast number of palaces, has not time to enter all; or who, in fact, has spent the hours in manufacturing the keys of palaces he may never explore, that might have enabled him to make himself master of every corner and crevice in a few. A great versatility of superficial

knowledge in all languages he may and probably has acquired; but the acquisition has, I am tempted to think, been made at the expense of a profound knowledge in any one of them.

It must not be imagined that I am inclined to undervalue the abilities of Mezzofanti; *au contraire*, I think very highly of them, but fear they have been so much exercised in the acquisition of languages, as not to have allowed him time for a great development in other and graver learning.

We found the Abbate Mezzofanti waiting our arrival at the library of the Institute this morning, for we declined accepting hospitality at breakfast; as I have as great an objection to go out to share that repast, as I have to admit strangers to partake it with me at home; finding that doing either unfits me for the subsequent occupations of the day.

The library occupies several rooms, and contains many rare and valuable manuscripts. Like most of the public libraries in Italy, it owes much of its collection to the generosity of its townsmen, for Pope Benedict XIV. and Cardinal Menti, both Bolognese, have greatly enriched it: the former not only bestowing on it a large quantity of books during his life, but bequeathing the whole of his library, a very extensive one, to it. The collection is now estimated to be about seventy-five or eighty thousand volumes, and not less than four thousand manuscripts.

Among the curious books shown to us was a copy of Henry VIII.'s work against Luther; probably the very work which gained him the title of Defender of the Faith, that faith he afterwards abandoned.

Among the manuscripts we saw the Lactantius, said to be of the fifth century, a small volume; the exterior of Aldrovando's collection, an Armenian of the twelfth century, with some very fine miniatures; and another manuscript in the writing of Michael Apostolius, one of the refugees from Constantinople.

It was highly interesting to behold these treasures with one who, like Mezzofanti, could enable us duly to appreciate them; but it would require a much longer time than we can devote to Bologna, to make us acquainted with even a quarter of the exteriors of the valuable contents of the library.

Mezzofanti is said to be master of no less than forty languages; when however we referred to this subject he disclaimed it, and modestly said, there was great exaggeration in the statement. The precise number he did not tell us; but it is evident

that his acquirements as a linguist must be very extraordinary to have gained for him so general a reputation; and, judging from the correctness with which he speaks English, without having ever left Italy, I can imagine his proficiency in other tongues. Byron might well say of Mezzofanti, that he would have been a most useful person at the building of the Tower of Babel, to serve as interpreter.

How powerfully reflection on one's own ignorance is forced on us when beholding the vast stores of erudition, the accumulation of ages, heaped together in libraries like this of Bologna. Reflections on the brevity of life also occur to the mind, for the most protracted existence could not enable the most studious person, not even a Magliabechi, to peruse all the works in such a collection. It would require the length of days of a Methusalem, joined to the knowledge of languages of a Mezzofanti, to compass this task; and never did I feel my own ignorance and insignificance more deeply, than when contemplating treasures that were like a sealed well to me.

An agreeable surprise awaited us at the gallery to-day. While viewing the *chefs-d'œuvre* that cover its walls, I found myself embraced by my amiable friends Mrs. W. and her pretty and clever daughter, Mrs. R., who are here *en route* to England. The Bolognese who were present seemed surprised at the warmth of our greeting; for the Italians, like other foreigners, imagine the English to be cold and undemonstrable in manner, if not in heart. Two English women more calculated to remove this erroneous impression could not be found than Mrs. W. and her daughter; for they are as affectionate as they are gentle in manner.

Well may Bologna be proud of her gallery, and of the artists whose glorious works grace it. Nowhere have I seen a collection of pictures arranged so well for affording an amateur the power of examining and comparing them. Here the works of the early school of painting precede those of the more highly finished; consequently the eye is not forced to contrast the somewhat formal and hard productions which characterise the first, with the graceful and exquisite works of the latter; but advances gradually to the pictures most calculated to charm and fix it. And yet the works of the early masters have a powerful attraction for me. One beholds in them the peculiarities which a deep study has enabled their followers to subdue; and sometimes detects beauties more happily developed in the

paintings of succeeding artists, which might never have existed had they not profited by the contemplation of their predecessors' works.

Who that has looked on, can ever forget the Saint Cecilia? What drawing!—what colouring! The Murder of the Innocents made me shudder: its truth of expression, and wonderful spirit, astonishing as a *chef-d'œuvre* of art, render a long examination of it too painful to be borne.

The Martyrdom of Saint Agnes is a very grand picture, and the face of the saint, full of mingled resignation and hope, offers a fine contrast to that of the executioner. It was pleasant to look on a Holy Family, by Innocent d' Imola, after having turned with excited feelings from the two former pictures: the expression of the Virgin is charming.

At the first glance, I took the Transfiguration, by Ludovico Carracci, to be a Correggio, so different is it from his usual manner; it is full of power and vigour.

The Rosario, by Domenichino, might be cut into two pictures, for it offers two different subjects; one, Murder, in its fearful shape of stabbing and trampling to death a young beautiful woman by an infuriated horse, urged on by a savage rider: and above this scene of cruelty is the Madonna and Child showering roses on St. Dominick.

The repetitions of martyrdoms and similar subjects of horror, however admirably represented, give me more pain than the excellence of the art displayed can give me pleasure; and detract considerably from the enjoyment which the contemplation of fine works confers.

We left the gallery, after having passed some hours there, thinking more highly than ever of the Bolognese school in general, and of Guido in particular, whose pictures here are indeed admirable.

We went through the Campo Santo to-day. It was formerly the Chartreuse of Bologna, and now serves as a cemetery, remarkable for the good order and cleanliness with which it is kept. Some of the inscriptions are very touching, from their simplicity; and appeal strongly to the heart, when perused, as to-day, in the silence and solitude of this place of death, with a blue sky and glorious sunshine overhead, and a balmy air fanning the brow and exhilarating the spirits. The sense of these blessings renders one more disposed to mourn for those torn for ever from the bright sunshine and cheerful earth, to the dark

and narrow home, where rest those who once enjoyed them as we now do. Without the blessed hope held out to us by religion, how fearful would be the prospect of a dreamless and eternal sleep in the cold dark grave!

MODENA.—This is a quiet and silent place: the palace large and disproportioned to the town, as also to the extent of territory of its sovereign. The gallery contains several good paintings by the Caracci, Guercino, Guido, Albano, and Dossi. The *custode* painted out with great complacency the pictures returned from Paris, a journey which is considered to be a certificate of their value; the French being supposed to have taken only the best. “They judge works of art better than they execute them, Signora,” was the *custode’s* remark.

The library contains above eighty thousand volumes, and above three thousand manuscripts. In it Muratori and Tiraboschi consulted authorities for their histories; and spent many an hour filling those pages since so often referred to by students. They were both at the head of this library, a circumstance which invested it with increased interest to me, who feel a reverence towards those pioneers in literature who open a route to the less laborious and enterprising. Two volumes of the Bible, with innumerable and beautiful miniatures by Taddeo Crivelli, and an artist whose name I forget, I could have looked at for hours.

A collection of provincial poetry, said to contain poems nowhere else to be met with; a manuscript of Dante, with some quaint figures on it; various manuscripts of Bojardo and Tasso; and the correspondence of Tiraboschi, were shown to us.

This fine library belonged to the house of Este; and was brought hither from Ferrara, when its possessor, Cæsar d’Este, was despoiled of his dominions by Clement VIII.

The museum contains some antiquities, but is only now forming. The bucket, rendered more famous by Tassoni, than by its having been taken from the Bolognese, still dangles from its chain: and I looked on it with interest, as having inspired a poem which, whatever Voltaire may have written in depreciation of it, has very great merit; but he who could depreciate Shakspeare, may be pardoned for attacking Tassoni.

Samuel Rogers! Samuel Rogers! never will I put faith in you again. In vain have I sought the Orsini Palace near the Rizzio gate, to see the picture of “Ginevra,” the luckless maiden

who found a tomb upon her bridal day within "an oakem chest, half eaten by the worm, but richly carved by Anthony of Trent."

Shall I confess it? this story so well told, was one of my great inducements to visit Modena; and now that I am here I can find no one who ever heard of it. Mine host shrugged his shoulders, and declared he never knew of such a thing; the *cicerone* was puzzled and confounded, and thought there must be some mistake, for had such an event ever occurred, it surely must have been communicated to him; for man and boy he had dwelt at Modena, and was acquainted with all circumstances that could interest strangers.

O Samuel Rogers!—yet let me not accuse you unjustly—

Lest I, perchance, should wrong thee, gentle bard,  
For now methinks I call to mind some note  
Remember'd vaguely, in which thou there didst own  
The place uncertain where th' event occurred.  
And sooth to say, thy Italy is now  
Lodg'd with some other books I value much,  
Within a *fourgon* journeying on to France,  
By nearer route than that which I have taken.  
So I cannot consult its graceful page  
Where sweet and gentle thoughts are ever found.

Deprived of Ginevra, I sought some other heroine in memory's cell; and remembered Tarquinia Molza, a fair poetess, born at Modena, in the middle of the fifteenth century. She excelled not only in poetry, but was a proficient in the Latin, Greek and Hebrew languages; and what was still more important than all this erudition, was an amiable and excellent woman. Appointed lady of honour to the Princesses Lucretia and Leonora d'Este, she passed many years in the dangerous ordeal of a court, respected for her genius, and beloved for her estimable qualities. When she returned to her native town, she received a diploma, granting her and her family the rights and prerogatives of Modena; which diploma is still preserved in the archives of Modena. Tasso has introduced her as one of the interlocutors in his "Dialogue on Love," which, in honour of her, he named Molza; and Francesco Patrizzi dedicated to her the third volume of his "Discussions Péripatétiques."

This dedication is so honourable to my sex, that I remember to have read it twice. Patrizzi says in it that he considers

her the most learned of all the women hitherto distinguished in the world of letters; that she perfectly understood the Greek and Latin historians and orators; and, above all, Plato among philosophers, and Pindar among the poets. He refers to her poetry in Latin as well as in Italian; and dwells with complacency on her knowledge of logic, and moral philosophy, physiology, theology, and all the other ologies: then sums up all by adding, "What may not be said of your skill in music, in which you surpass not only all musicians, but the Muses themselves." Of her eloquence, benevolence, virtue, and grace, he makes an equally honourable mention; and this from such a writer was no mean praise.

Read this, ye envious men, who are disposed to question the capabilities of women for grave studies! and ponder on it, ye ill-judging women, who *claim* an equality with men, instead of rendering yourselves more than equal, by the high cultivation of your minds, and the exemption from passion and prejudice to which the necessities and temperatures of political life expose them. Remember, that the rare endowments and still more rare accomplishments of Tarquinia Molza were so meekly borne, and her domestic duties so admirably fulfilled, that those who most admired her for her genius and learning, valued her still more for her goodness. Lose not, then, O woman! the precious time afforded you for mental cultivation, in vain and unbecoming clamours for equal rights with men. Those amongst you who perpetrate this sorry folly, inflict the deepest injury on your sex, by furnishing ground to the other, to deny you the respect to which you are entitled. Be worthy to become the friends as well as companions of your husbands, by qualifying yourselves to share their studies while sweetening their homes. Rejoice that you are saved from the arena of politics, and the arduous efforts compelled by professional life; and that the many hours of uninteresting labour to which men are condemned, are left to you for the acquisition of knowledge, and the fulfilment of duties pregnant with the dearest interests. Sooth their care, reward their toil, secure their peace; and your equality, nay more, your superiority, will be felt, if not acknowledged, by all who owe their felicity to you.

But here am I advising my sex on their true interest, instead of noticing the souvenirs of Modena.

Few places have evinced, in former times, a greater love

of science, or furnished a more appalling example to what crimes its votaries may be urged. Witness the terrible parricide committed by the brothers Grillenzone, in 1518, as related by Muratori.

The brothers Grillenzone were seven in number, and all dwelt beneath the paternal roof. Devoted to science, and fondly attached to each other, the father wished them to go forth in search of professions; and they, in order to avoid a separation, determined on his death. These brothers assembled at their house all the persons who, like themselves, were devoted to learning, and employed masters to lecture on, and explain the subjects of their studies. The meetings soon led to the formation of an academy; and Modena owes to these parricides an obligation that must have entitled them to her gratitude, were the recollection of it not stained by their fearful crime.

The Rangoni family, too, did much for the advancement of literature at Modena, and many were the *savants* and distinguished writers who cast a lustre on this now comparatively secluded and deserted town, in which people are more occupied at present in manufacturing food for the body, in the shape of sausages, which are said to vie in excellence with those of Bologna, than in providing food for the mind.

REGGIO.—The aspect of Reggio is very different from the generality of Italian towns. Cheerful and scrupulously clean, it invites the traveller to sojourn in it; and the appearance of its inhabitants harmonises with the place, as they look gay and animated. Reggio gave birth to Ariosto, a fact of which our *cicerone* did not fail to remind us before he had accompanied us half through the first street.

It is curious to observe the pride that such people take in their celebrated men, and with which they refer to the places of their birth. They do not mention it calmly and dispassionately as a piece of information, but name it as something to occasion exultation. I like this enthusiasm, it is an incitement, as well as a reward to genius; and is of all vanities the most blameless.

The cathedral contains some good pictures by Guercino and Palma, and fine sculpture by Clementi, a native of Reggio, said to have been a pupil of Michael Angelo.

The church of the Madonna della Ghiara is a noble edifice,



and boasts some clever paintings, the work of a native artist named Ferrari, Ludovico Caraccio, Spada, and Palma.

The library is very extensive, and is rich in books of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and a collection of the works of the authors of Reggio. The theatre might put to shame those of the most considerable cities in other countries, being not only of a size peculiarly well calculated for the accommodation of a large audience, but also for scenic effect.

PARMA.—Silent, gloomy, and deserted, Parma seems to offer a striking picture of the altered fortunes of its mistress. There still hangs around it the semblance of grandeur, but it is grandeur "fallen from its high estate:" and on beholding its empty streets and decaying buildings, one cannot refrain from pitying her who was once empress of the gayest and most brilliant capital in the world, for being condemned to reside here, and support the mimic form of regal splendour shorn of all its dignity. The fate of Napoleon, chained Prometheus-like on his ocean rock, had a sublimity in it: but she who shared his throne, whose brow was encircled by a diadem, before which the proudest monarchs bowed, to be reduced to hold her state in this poor town.—O! it is pitiful! and Maria Louisa must have less pride or more philosophy than falls to the share of most of her sex, to be enabled to support it with such equanimity.

We went over the ducal Palace to-day, which has nothing regal about it; and no greater number of apartments than generally appertains to the residence of a private individual. Its appearance is mean and common-place, divested of dignity or good taste. The furniture is like that of a *Fermier-Général de France*, after long use, rich, tasteless, and faded.

The carriage of Lord and Lady Burghersh was at the entrance, and the *custode* who showed us over the apartments, reverted with no little complacency to the fact, that "the ambassador *Inglese*, and the niece of the great Wellington, were then sitting with Maria Louisa!"

In a lumber-room was shown us the toilette presented to the Empress of France, and the cradle given to the King of Rome, by the city of Paris! As ill did this mean and vulgar apartment seem fitted to enshrine these costly gifts, the wrecks of an empire unparalleled in history, as did the palace itself to be the residence of her who has been mistress of France!

There was the subject of a whole epic poem, and more touching than most of such productions are, in the contemplation of these trophies of the former state of Maria Louisa. There was the toilette meant to adorn the person of her whom all France delighted to honour. Once lodged in a gilded chamber of the Tuilleries, with proud and titled dames surrounding it, to deck their royal mistress; now, neglected and covered with dust, it was put aside in a lumber-room; and exhibited by a *custode*, who was little conscious that, by this venal display of it, he elicited observations far from favourable to its owner. And there stood the cradle given by the capital of France to *him* whose birth was hailed with such universal rejoicings; the child, whose coming into the world was looked upon as the security of that dynasty doomed so soon afterwards to be overthrown. That rich and gorgeous cradle in which slumbered, unconscious of the fate which awaited him, that fair boy over whose pillow Napoleon has bent in rapture, forgetting the fierceness of the warrior in the all-absorbing tenderness of the father; there it stood tarnished and dimmed, to be scrutinised by strangers for the payment of a few francs!

If the fallen empress, to gratify curiosity, or to enrich her menial, could allow the gift made to her, in her palmy days, to be thus exhibited, surely the heart of the mother ought to have protected from desecration the infant couch of her son; over which, the great, the wondrous, and the since fallen father of that ill-starred child had often stooped to impress the kiss of melting affection on the fair cheek of his sleeping cherub! Ought not this cradle to have been placed in some chamber sacred to the memory of that father, whose heart yearned with such tenderness towards the wife and child he knew he should never see again?—that husband whose lips never uttered a reproach at the desertion of her, who having shared his splendour, could leave him when fortune forsook his banners, to pine a prisoner on a desolate rock, without even a line to soothe his grief, or to tell that he was still remembered?

I turned from these neglected trophies of departed glory with no increased respect for her who, having allowed them to be offered for sale, and finding no purchaser, now permits them to be shown to all who desire to behold such mementos of the mutability of fortune; and to moralise on the fallen greatness of one whose name will ever remind posterity of the

most signal example of mortal instability. Not greater the ascent than the downfall!

Went over the Steccata church; containing the usual number of pictures and monuments. The ceiling of the gallery, behind the high altar, has Moses breaking the tables of the law, and another fine, though unfinished work of Parmegiano, Adam and Eve, said to be the last he ever touched.

The Palazzo di Giardino, or old ducal palace, contains a room well worthy attention, the ceiling being painted by Agostino Caraccio, and the walls by Cignani. These frescos are charming; and their beauty excites regret that one compartment was left unfinished, Caraccio having died while engaged on it. We lingered long in contemplating them, instead of hurrying round the various churches to which our *cicerone* was anxious to conduct us; such persons attaching in general more importance to the quantity than to the quality of what they show. He pointed out to us the spot once occupied by the house of Petrarch; that house in which he received the account of the death of Laura, and had the remarkable dream in which she appeared to him.

PIACENZA.—This is a cheerful though not a fine town, and the country around it is fertile and smiling. The cathedral and church of the Madonna della Campagna have some good pictures and frescos; but after the multitudinous collections I have seen, I begin to get tired of noting down any that have not made a very striking impression on me.

In the square are two equestrian statues of great merit; one represents Ranuccio and the other Alexander Farnese. I did not visit the town-hall or theatre, though both are said to be worthy of examination; but I looked on the spot where it is said Alberoni first saw the light, and where Pope Gregory X. was born.

The difference between individuals born on the same spot, is as great as that between flowers springing from the same bed. Alberoni, the son of a gardener, bold and ambitious, rose by his talents, even less than by his consummate tact, to the government of Spain, and restored to it the martial character of former times; while Gregory, the scion of an ancient and noble family, devoted his abilities to reconcile the differences that had so long divided the eastern and western churches.

GENOA.—Once more at Genoa. How many recollections come crowding on memory at the sight of this place, and the well-known objects that every where meet my view! In each, and all, Byron bears a prominent part, and every thing around me looks so exactly as when he used to be present, that I feel my regret for his loss renewed afresh. Strange and powerful effect of association! On the balcony near which I now write *he* has stood conversing with me; the same scene spread out before us, the same blue clouds floating over our heads. So distinctly does the spot recal him to my memory, that I seem again to see his face, that expressive and intelligent countenance; and to hear the sound of that clear, low, and musical voice, never more to be heard on earth.

I can hardly bring myself to think that five long years have elapsed since I stood here listening to Byron's reflections on the past, and projects for the future: and that now he is in the narrow house.

When I last visited Genoa, it was on our route to Nice in 1826. Snow was then on the ground, and every thing was so dark and dreary, that Genoa no longer appeared as I had been accustomed to behold it; but now, with a blue sky and sunshine, a genial air, and every thing around wearing the aspect of summer, it looks so precisely as it was wont to do, when in 1823 I first sojourned here, that all my recollections of that happy period are awakened.

Our kind friend Mr. Barry has been already here to greet us, and we have promised to dine with him to-morrow at Albaro, in the Palazzo Saluzzi, the house where I first saw Byron. He remarked that the sight of us brought back to him the memory of Lord Byron very forcibly, and spoke of him with much feeling.

The public walks, the *Acqua Verde* and the *Acqua Sola*, are much improved since I left them. Walking in the latter, I saw, attended by a lady, an English girl, whose countenance struck me as resembling in an extraordinary degree that of Lord Byron; and on approaching nearer to her, the likeness became still more evident. Our *laquais-de-place* observing that the young lady had excited our curiosity, advanced, and in a low tone of voice informed us that she was the daughter of the great poet, Lord Byron.

It was indeed "Ada, sole daughter of my house and heart." We had not previously heard that Lady Byron was in Genoa,

so that we were little conscious when remarking the family resemblance how natural it was. And here were they sojourning in this place, where five years ago *his* heart would have palpitated with joy at the idea of being so near them; and where the knowledge that his daughter's feet had pressed the soil, would have endeared the very earth to him. Here, where they so often occupied his thoughts, those busy, bitter, yet tender thoughts, were they looking on the same objects, and moving in the same scenes once familiar to him! And he who would have welcomed them is in his English grave: and nothing remains to tell them with what yearning affection they were remembered by him here, when a mournful foreboding, too truly verified by the event, told him he should never return from Greece; for which expedition he was then preparing.

The sight of Lady Byron and her daughter affected me strangely, and brought back to my mind many of the conversations in which Lord Byron referred to them with such tenderness.

We went early to-day to our dinner engagement at Mr. Barry's, and felt a mournful interest in inspecting the apartments occupied by Lord Byron. They are very nearly in the same state as when he resided here; for Mr. and Mrs. Barry entertain a lively recollection of him, and like to leave undisturbed every thing that identifies the place with his memory.

I sat on the chair where I had formerly been seated next him; looked from the window whence he had pointed out a beautiful view; and listened to Mr. Barry's graphic description of the scene, when becalmed in the gulf of Genoa, the day he sailed for Greece, he returned, and walked through the rooms of his deserted dwelling, filled with melancholy forebodings. He had hoped to have found in it *her* whom he was destined never more to behold, that fair and young Italian lady, the Contessa Guiccioli; whose attachment to him had triumphed over every sentiment of prudence and interest, and by its devotion and constancy half redeemed its sin. But she, overwhelmed by grief at the sad parting, had been placed in a travelling carriage while almost in a state of insensibility: and was journeying towards Bologna, little conscious that he whom she would have given all she possessed on earth to see once more, was looking on the chamber she had left, and the flowers she had loved; his mind filled with a presentiment that they should never meet again.

I have always thought that Lord Byron had his own peculiar position in view, when he wrote "Sardanapalus;" for in it I find the deep emotions that agitated his breast towards two women at the same time. The least demonstration of affection, from his ——— would have brought him, full of remorseful tenderness, to her feet; even while his heart owned and melted at the devotion of ———. By dying only could he be faithful to both.

Such is one of the bitter consequences resulting from the violation of ties, never severed without retribution.

We sat for some time in the chamber in which Byron always wrote. Into this no one was permitted to enter while he occupied it; his door was locked, and a perfect stillness reigned around. Here he completed the "Age of Bronze," and the last cantos of "Don Juan." Here also he wrote all the letters and the poems addressed to me, now in my possession.

We walked on the terrace, and in the garden where he so constantly walked: visited *Il Paradiso*, a charming villa near the Saluzzi, to which he once accompanied us, and in which he wrote an impromptu on the occasion. In short, we went over all his former haunts. Mrs. Barry played and sang to us in the evening, and with all woman's delicate tact selected music in unison with our feelings; to which her powerful and sweet voice lent new charms.

Altogether, the day was one which I shall not easily forget: and Byron, could he have been aware of the kind and gentle feelings still entertained towards his memory, by those assembled in his former dwelling, would not have been sceptical of their friendship.

Mr. and Mrs. Barry dined with us to-day, and in the evening we went to the opera. It offered nothing worthy of note; but the ballet, in which Mademoiselle Brignolle danced, was good. Her style is peculiar; she advances rapidly across the stage on the extreme point of her toes, without for a moment losing her *aplomb*, cuts into the air, and alights again on the point of her feet, as if she were no heavier than gossamer.

Lord and Lady Burghersh are arrived here and are as popular at Genoa as in all other parts of Italy where they are known. They have done much to efface the impression entertained by Italians, that the English aristocracy are not much devoted to the fine arts, or prone to encourage them; for Lady Burghersh is said to be not only a *connoisseuse* in painting,

but to have arrived at no mean excellence in it herself; while the kind-hearted and excellent Lord Burghersh is a proficient in music, and has composed some very charming things.

A circumstance occurred to-day which goes far to justify the good opinion I have always entertained of the Italians, since I have dwelt among them. A shoemaker, who when we were first at Genoa resided in a small house in the flagged passage leading to the Alberga della Villa, used to work outside his door, plying his trade, and gaily singing; while his only child, a little girl of two years old, used to toddle round him, sometimes holding a flower to his nose, or interrupting his occupation by her embraces. The mother, an interesting looking brunette, was wont to stand at her door knitting, or working; her eyes beaming with tenderness as she looked from the child to the father, who lavished on the playful little creature every epithet of love. We noticed this humble group continually, and they soon became accustomed to our faces; and would salute us with smiles and good wishes, expressed with that warmth peculiar to Italians. The child it was who first noticed us, or at least who first evinced her recognition; for she would kiss her little hand, or hold out a flower for us to smell, and when our acquaintance had ripened into more familiarity, would clap her hands with joy when she saw us approach. The father and mother, delighted with the playfulness and intelligence of their child, and flattered by our notice of her, would recount to us as we paused before their lowly dwelling, "the sayings and doings" of their darling; and tell how two babes, their first-born, had been taken from them by God, before they had been able to articulate a word, or to walk.

"Ah! it was a terrible thing, Signora, to see them carried out of this door, and I thought my poor Teresina would have died when the last was snatched from us."—"Do not mention it, *anima mia*, I cannot even now bear to think of it!" and the good Teresina raised her apron to her eyes. The child ran to her mother and held up her little mouth to be kissed, and the father said, "She is so sensible, Signora, she understands every thing, God bless her dear little heart!"—"And she is so like her sister and brother, whom we lost, Signora," sobbed the mother, "that I sometimes fear she too may be taken from us."—"Teresina, Teresina, do not think of any thing so dreadful!" and the father caught his child eagerly, and pressed her in his arms.

I purchased some silver trinkets for the child, and among the rest was a medal of St. Teresa, her patron saint, to be worn round her neck. The delight of the parents could only be equalled by their gratitude, and the little girl, too, grew fonder of us.

The morning we left Genoa this family group came to see us enter our carriages, and brought two beautiful bouquets for our acceptance. We had much difficulty in inducing them to retain some money which we positively forced into their hands; and the tears flowed down their cheeks as they held up the child, and invoked blessings on us as we drove off.

We often spoke of these humble friends at Genoa, and when we returned in 1826, looked in vain for them. They had left the flagged passage near the *Alberga della Villa*, and had gone no one knew whither. The day after our arrival here, I encountered the *laquais-de-place* who had formerly served us; and offered him some reward if he could discover the abode of Teresina and her husband. He this day brought me the intelligence I sought, and led us to the dwelling of this worthy couple.

We found them in an obscure quarter of the town, and great was their joy at seeing us, though it was soon checked by grief; and they wept while telling us that the little Teresina, like her sister and brother, had been snatched from them.—“But she lived long enough to be able to utter your names, Signora, and would kiss the medallion.” Here the poor Teresina drew the one I had given her child, from her bosom, and pressed it to her lips. “When she looked at it, Signora, she would say Donna Margaretta, which we had taught her; for we could not remember how to pronounce the other name of la Contessa.”

“We left the old house, Signora,” said the poor man, “for we had not the heart to stay there. I could not work for thinking of my lost darling, and I missed her every minute. You remember, Signora, how she used to be playing round me, and holding a flower to my nose—so we came here; and I have more work than I can do, and we are rich; but what is the good of our prosperity now, when we have no longer our Teresina?”

„ We often declared that you would be sorry, Signora, if you should know that she was gone,” continued the good woman, “but, if you remember, I said she was so like her sister



and brother, that she too would be taken from us. Ah! she was too beautiful to live!—But I must show you how carefully we have kept your gifts;” and she took from a coffer a little box in which were all the little presents we had given the child.—“The medallion was always round her neck, and I never take it off mine. Nor do I ever pray for her soul, Signora, without also praying that heaven will bless you, who were so kind to her.”

This worthy couple seemed consoled by the sympathy for their sorrow which we evinced; and felt, I am persuaded, more gratitude for the patient attention we lent to the recital of their misfortune than for the presents we forced on their acceptance. They shed many tears when we left them, and offered up fervent prayers for us. We were all sensibly touched by this little episode, which confirmed us in our favourable opinion of the warmth of heart and gratitude of the Italians.

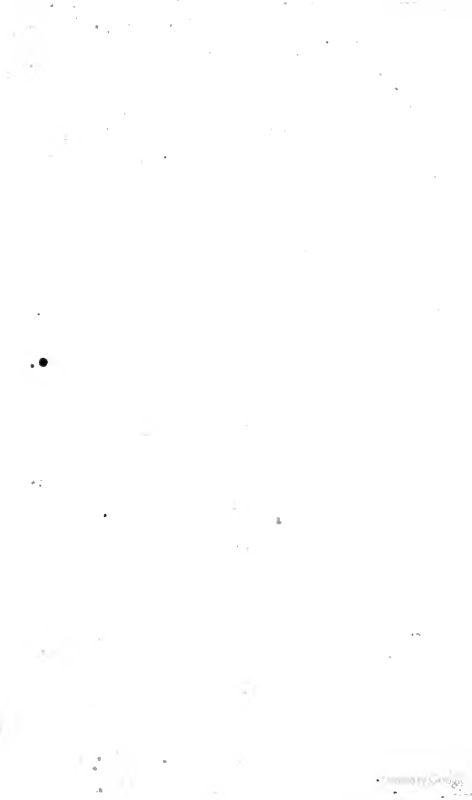
We have bidden farewell to all our old and well-remembered haunts at Genoa: and to-morrow we leave it, perhaps for ever. The note of preparation sounds through all our apartments; imperials and chaise-seats are being packed, bills paid, canvass sacks of silver given to the courier, and letters of credit made out.

A charming *calèche* from England was landed for us to-day. It does credit to the skill of Mr. Barker, and was a very agreeable surprise to me, who did not even know that it was ordered. Lord Blessington has a princely way of bestowing gifts. The first intimation I had of this was the being taken to look at it; and then having expressed my admiration of it, I was told it was for me, as he had remembered that I admired one which Lady Burghersh used to drive in at Florence, built by Barker; so a similar one was ordered for me, and had been some time expected.

Our kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Barry, came to see us depart this morning; and our separation was, as are all separations from those we regard, a sad one. They are a most excellent couple, warm-hearted, and with minds highly cultivated.

I omit describing the route over the Cornice, having detailed it before. It is greatly improved since we last traversed it; and now admits of being travelled in carriages, instead of, as formerly, only on horseback.

THE END.





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